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# A Study of Professional Development School Program Graduates Through Their First Year as Urban School Teachers

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**A STUDY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL PROGRAM  
GRADUATES THROUGH THEIR FIRST YEAR AS URBAN  
SCHOOL TEACHERS**

by

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## ABSTRACT

### A STUDY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL PROGRAM GRADUATES THROUGH THEIR FIRST YEAR AS URBAN SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Old Dominion University, 1994

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This year-long study focused on three first-year teachers in order to examine how they adjusted to their first year, how they developed professionally, and how they changed as teachers. Each teacher possessed characteristics for success in urban schools, and had completed a Professional Development School internship.

Using a self-efficacy test, interviews, and a teacher survey, the three teachers were measured throughout the academic year with regard to their level of readiness to teach, the impact of their Professional Development School training on their work as teachers, self-efficacy, and willingness to continue teaching in an urban setting.

Regarding their level of readiness to teach, the three indicated that they were not only prepared to teach, but well prepared for the challenges and demands of the urban classroom. Principals of the three teachers confirmed teacher success in the urban classroom. Teacher development was observed by analyzing ethnographic interviews to examine how teacher focus changed throughout the school year and compared with characteristics identified in teacher development models. The teacher development models utilized were skill acquisition, reorientation of concerns, and life cycle. The three teachers advanced more rapidly through the stages of development than teachers cited in the literature.

In analyzing how the participants changed as teachers, the data showed that the three teachers overcame issues of personal adequacy, gained mastery over their own teaching methods, and became increasingly focused on the needs of their students.

The analysis showed noticeable stability in their personal and teaching efficacy. Also stable throughout the academic year was the participants' willingness to remain in the urban school setting. Responses indicated that the three first year teachers believed that their Professional Development School experience helped their adaptation to the urban environment by empowering them to collaborate with other teachers, respect diversity, be flexible in methodology, and be willing to try innovative approaches.

The successful experiences of the three teachers involved in this study, as measured over time by the self-efficacy test, interviews, and a survey, illustrating the influence of the Professional Development School model for recruiting and preparing these three successful urban teachers. The teachers in this study had many effective urban teacher characteristics which helped them during their first year of teaching. The success of the urban educators was due to a combination of Professional Development School preparation program, experience and utilization of effective urban teacher characteristics.



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## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### *Urban Schools*

Urban school districts have trouble recruiting qualified teachers. In 1991, urban school districts hired 20,000 teachers with provisional or alternate certification to work with predominately low-income whites and children of color. Students in urban schools with large percentages of minority students have only a 50% chance of being taught by a certified mathematics or science teacher (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996). Only 12 percent of teachers who have been trained through a traditional teacher preparation program are willing to teach in a large inner city school (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). Even if urban districts find qualified teachers who are willing to teach in urban schools, they find it difficult to retain them. As a result, many of the nation's highest teacher attrition rates occur in urban districts (Adams & Dial, 1993).

In 1990, Haberman and Rickards in their study of urban teacher attrition, surveyed urban teachers who resigned, retired or terminated their contracts. They found that 90 percent of the teachers who left were able to secure teaching jobs in other districts. The reasons for leaving the urban district of the Milwaukee Public Schools were other employment, a residency requirement, personal reasons, moving from the area, retirement, and to seek further education. The same study stated that the reasons teachers nationally leave the teaching profession are because of low salaries, lack of public support for education, low

status of teaching, discipline, and unmotivated and uninterested students (Haberman & Rickards, 1990).

However, there are teachers who want to teach in urban schools and who are effective in that environment. The challenge of school districts is to identify and attract those teachers. Unfortunately, those who are willing to teach in urban districts are often unprepared for those settings. Teaching in an urban setting is very different from teaching in the suburbs (Guyton, 1994; Haberman, 1996). Urban students develop differently, learn differently, and the nature of the content they learn is different from students in the suburbs (Haberman, 1996).

In 1994, Guyton followed first year teachers in urban settings to determine what they needed to know to teach in urban schools. She found that urban teachers need better instruction on how to develop social skills in students. Urban teachers also need increased knowledge regarding the effects of poverty on student learning. Teachers in urban schools need more opportunities to get to know the parents of the students, to develop interpersonal skills, and to know more about the culture of urban schools. Failure to consider a student's cultural connections leads to misunderstandings about the effect of the schooling experience on children, especially in the racial and ethnic diversity of urban schools (Bowers, 2000). Advanced interpersonal skills also are needed to cope with rejection, discouragement, and frustration that first year teachers experience, especially in urban settings (Guyton, 1994).

Working conditions in schools vary. The Metropolitan Life Survey of The American Teacher (1995) found that there were differences in teachers' perceptions of their work environments.

They found that teachers working in suburban and rural areas generally have seen improvements in both their work environments and the recognition they receive. Teachers in suburban and rural areas have seen improved public and parental support, and a decline in the number of students lacking basic skills, teenage suicides, and student absenteeism. In contrast, urban teachers have seen their conditions worsen and are less likely to say they feel respected and recognized for good performance. Urban teachers also are less likely to be positive in their assessment of the curriculum, academic standards, and the levels of funding for their schools.

### *Beginning Teachers*

Teachers who persist through the first years in the profession are likely to continue to teach (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991). Beginning teachers, however, leave the profession at a disproportionately high rate. In some districts up to 40% of beginning teachers resign during their first two years (Wise, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 1987). High teacher turnover is very costly for school districts. In California the \$12 million dollars set aside for teacher recruitment in the 1998-99 school year (Perry, 1998) might have been spent on improving the quality of teaching and learning for children (Fleener, 1998). Problems most often cited by beginning teachers include handling classroom discipline, providing meaningful student motivation, coping with individual differences, assessing students' work, developing and maintaining productive relationships with parents, organizing class work, compensating for insufficient and for inadequate teaching materials and supplies, and confronting and handling problems of individual

students (Veenman, 1984). Teachers lament that their teacher preparation programs did not prepare them to work effectively at the start of their teaching careers (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). Thus, the quality and relevance of teacher preparation is significant because teachers who survive the first years are likely to continue to teach for many more years (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991).

Urban schools have had the most difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers. To alleviate the teaching shortages, many urban schools have resorted to hiring uncertified or emergency certified teachers. A survey of 3,201 teachers hired since 1985 indicates that only 12% of these teachers would be willing to teach in urban schools (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). Another study found that only 18% of undergraduate students preparing to be teachers even considered teaching in an urban school system (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1989). To compound the situation, many of the nation's highest teacher attrition rates occur in urban districts (Adams & Dial, 1993). Nationally, approximately one-half of beginning teachers leave the teaching profession in the first six years (Haberman & Rickards, 1990). In urban districts this turnover occurs over a period as long as five years, or within a period as short as three to four years (Haberman & Rickards, 1990). Attrition rates are expected to rise over the first few years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Grissmer & Kirby, 1987).

### *Effective Urban Teachers*

Haberman (1995) identified effective urban teachers as "star teachers". Star teachers behave differently than those who fail to



reach and to educate their students, or those who simply quit the profession. Effective teachers think differently, and their beliefs and behaviors represent an integrated ideology (see Table 1). Haberman identified fifteen characteristics of star teachers.

According to Haberman (1995) effective urban teachers are persistent. They persist in their positive and proactive belief about the potential of children in poverty. Often referred to as problem solvers because of their creativity, these teachers feel a deep responsibility to maintain student interest and involvement in learning. Effective urban teachers protect childrens' learning. They involve their students in learning by modeling their own interest in learning. They also focus on ideas that interest students, and constantly search for creative, innovative, and authentic approaches to involve students in learning.

Effective urban teachers are able to put ideas into practice. They create classrooms in which students are involved actively in learning, and explain why they chose those activities and the ideological reasons behind the selections. Effective urban teachers continually develop and improve themselves by putting new ideas into practice; and they have the ability to take theories and transform them into classroom activities that are appropriate for their students. Excellent urban teachers reflect on their teaching and experiences and are able to develop as teachers.

Table 1

Characteristics of Effective Urban Teachers (Haberman, 1995)

---

Persistence

Protecting Childrens' Learning

Putting Ideas into Practice

Approach to "At-Risk" Children

Professional-Personal Orientation to Students

The Bureaucracy

Fallibility

Emotional and Physical Stamina

Organizational Ability

Explanation of Children's Success

Explanation of Teacher Success

Real Teaching

Making Students Feel Needed

The Material vs. The Student

Gentle Teaching in a Violent Society

---

Effective urban teachers approach at-risk children differently (Haberman, 1995). Haberman identified this characteristic as the most powerful predictor of success in the urban classroom. "Star teachers" look for ways, techniques, and strategies to reach and to educate at risk students. These teachers understand that educators who blame the victim will fail as teachers, while teachers whose natural inclination is to search for more effective teaching strategies, regardless of the students' background will have a chance of becoming effective urban teachers.

Effective urban teachers' professional and personal orientation to students is a combination of teacher behaviors reinforced by a clearly defined ideology (Haberman, 1995). They develop relationships with students that demonstrate their caring and concern. Effective urban teachers model learning behavior using their relationships with students to attract them to learning activities. These teachers also foster their students' intrinsic motivation to learn. They set classroom rules that are few in number and coupled with logical consequences.

Effective urban teachers cope and adjust to the bureaucracy of a school to protect themselves from being overwhelmed. They spend a limited amount of time on clerical tasks that do not help them teach, quickly learning what rules and policies must be followed and which ones can be delayed or ignored. Excellent urban teachers also acknowledge their fallibility, recognizing that they too make mistakes which they are willing to correct.

Effective urban teachers have the emotional and physical stamina to capture the attention of students. They also have the extraordinary organizational ability to manage their classroom environments successfully. Effective urban teachers design instruction in which they take the role of a coach and act as resources to students. Effective urban teachers believe that teacher success requires effort and hard work. When they explain student success, effective urban teachers recognize student autonomy and individual differences, and they seek to actualize the potential of all students through encouragement and authentic learning opportunities. Clearly, effective urban teachers have high expectations for all their students. These teachers use a variety of approaches to facilitate learning. Effective urban

teachers make sure that students master concepts by reviewing and reteaching as many times as necessary. They build rapport with students that communicates the need for involvement and mutual participation. Haberman's real teaching paradigm forces teachers to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. Thus, the students of effective urban teachers feel needed and wanted in the classroom because these teachers utilize gentle teaching in a violent society. Haberman (1995) identifies gentle teaching as a combination of teacher behaviors that demonstrate high expectations, belief in the capabilities of students, and nurture students toward self-disciplined learning.

### *Teacher Efficacy*

In addition to the characteristics identified by Haberman, Pontius's (1998) research revealed that teachers who have a belief in their ability to teach also can promote success in the first stages of a teaching career. Teachers who are the most effective believe that they are capable of motivating and instructing students successfully (Good & Brophy, 1994). Thus, self-efficacy is an important component of teacher effectiveness. Teachers with high self-efficacy use practices that are associated with high achievement gains (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Bandura (1989) found that diminished self-efficacy beliefs can give rise to anxiety and despondency which are factors that may be associated with teacher attrition rates. A first year teacher's commitment to teaching as a career and his or her sense of efficacy appear to be related (Kemmis & Warren, 1991). Kemmis and Warren found evidence to support that efficacy may be related to whether teachers stay in teaching or in urban settings.

The challenge of increasing efficacy has been addressed in some school districts by having teachers participate in Professional Development Schools. Teachers at all levels of experience who have been involved in a Professional Development School model have shown an increase in self-efficacy (Morris & Nunnery, 1993). Morris and Nunnery's research demonstrated that experienced teachers who mentored new teachers increased in self-efficacy. These experienced teachers, in return, positively influenced the training and entry into the profession for new teachers.

#### *Professional Development Schools*

The improvement of teacher preparation programs and the retention of qualified and effective teachers are essential to school improvement. In addressing teacher preparation and retention, the Carnegie Forum on Education in the Economy (1986), the Holmes Group (1986, 1990), the Ford Foundation (Anderson, 1993), and the Rand Corporation (Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1987), all advocate collaboration between public schools and universities.

Professional Developmental Schools bring together universities, schools of education, and public schools to address the issues of school reform, including teacher preparation and retention. Professional Development Schools assume greater responsibility for the preparation and induction of new teachers than traditional preparation programs (Tomorrows Schools, 1990).

In Tomorrow's Schools of Education (1995), the Holmes Group identified five goals for the professionalization of teaching:

1. Making teaching intellectually sound;
2. Recognizing differences in teachers' knowledge, skill,

- and commitment;
3. Creating relevant and intellectually defensible standards of entry into teaching;
  4. Connecting schools of education to the schools;
  5. Making schools better places for practicing teachers to work and to learn (p. iii-vi).

The Holmes Group (1990) envisioned Professional Development Schools that focus on urban areas to work cooperatively to support and enhance preservice teacher education, improve and extend programs of teacher induction, conduct research on teacher education, and to increase teacher retention. Professional Development Schools educate new teachers in knowledge and techniques, create a vision, and encourage a commitment to the learning of the poor (Holmes, 1990). Currently, there are over 1,000 Professional Development Schools throughout the United States (Schwartz, 2000). Not all Professional Development Schools are the same. Each setting is distinctive. Each seeks to model best practices that support positive social and academic development for students and improved practice for teachers (Abdal-Haqq, 1998).

Many Professional Development Schools are designed to meet the needs of teachers and administrators who work in the most challenging school settings (Stallings, 1991). Several studies (Stallings, 1991; Benton & Richardson, 1993; Morris & Nunnery, 1994; Long & Morrow, 1995) have shown positive effects of urban placements on teacher development. One such Professional Development School in Texas focused on reducing the drop-out rate of new urban teachers. Stalling (1991) found that ninety percent

of the student teachers who completed student teaching in a Professional Development School indicated that they would welcome a teaching assignment in an urban setting. Fleener (1998) found that attrition rates were different between teachers who went through traditional preparation programs from those who went through a Professional Development School preparation program. Graduates from a Professional Development School preparation program had significantly lower attrition rates.

In contrast, Weiner (1990) found that graduates who went through a traditional education program and thought they wanted to teach in urban schools, actually may have been discouraged from seeking such placements after completing their student teaching in urban schools. Traditional teacher education programs may not anticipate the confusion that student teachers face. Often, student teachers enter a classroom with idealism that collides with the constraints imposed by their limited knowledge and skill. Student teachers often harbor feelings of alienation from the students they teach, their cooperating teachers, and their course work. To be effective urban teacher preparation programs need to recognize the potential for estrangement in these areas and address them accordingly (Weiner, 1990).

Morris & Nunnery (1994) found that teachers who had participated in a Professional Development School showed more confidence in their ability to help or to teach students who were at risk for school failure. Student teachers involved in a Professional Development School acquired more realistic expectations about teaching. The practicum experiences provided the ground work for understanding learning styles and different teaching styles which helped to promote a positive attitude toward

meeting students' individual needs (Benton & Richardson, 1993). Overall, Professional Development School graduates had more self-confidence, better relations with the parents of their students, and proved more productive as new teachers, because they had already experienced a school year (Long & Morrow, 1995).

#### *Developmental Stages of Teaching*

The first year of teaching is a time when teachers are most unsure of their competence. Learning to teach is a unique mixture of success, problems, surprises, and satisfactions (Johnson & Ryan, 1983). Beginning teachers do not all enter the profession with the same needs (Chester, 1992). Having knowledge of the specific needs of teachers is vital if teacher training programs are to offer effective strategies to promote personal growth and teacher effectiveness (Burden, 1986). Teachers who are at higher stages of development are more adaptive in their teaching style, respond more to individual differences, use a variety of teaching models, and are more flexible and tolerant (Hunt, 1971).

Huberman (1991) stated that teacher development is a process, not a series of events. Teachers vary on the duration of time they spend at each stage. In a study on the developmental stages of student teachers, Piland (1992) found that movement into the next stage occurred when teachers increased in self-confidence, developed trust with the cooperating teacher, built relationships with students, and developed their own teaching skills.

Although the concept of developmental stages in teaching has been explored for some time (Becker, 1970; Yarger & Mertens, 1976; Aepelman, 1978; Burden, 1980; Feiman-Nemser, 1982; Burke, Fessler & Christensen, 1984; Harrington & Sacks, 1984; Bloom & Jorde-Bloom, 1987; Berliner, 1988; Huberman, 1989, 1992; Piland, 1992; Bullough



& Baughman, 1993; Moreira, 1996), it has not been linked with participation in Professional Developmental Schools. There are several different teacher development models, each with its own underlying philosophy of teacher preparation. This study examined and utilized three different approaches to teacher development: skill acquisition, reorientation of concerns, and the life cycle model. The underlying assumption of the skill acquisition model is that given all the specific skills needed to teach, preservice teachers will be successful. The contention of the reorientation of concerns model is that the problem with teacher preparation is the irrelevance of the teacher education curriculum to the process of becoming a teacher. The life cycle approach centers around teaching as a whole and observes how teachers grow and change over time (Moreira, 1996).

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to determine how three potentially effective first year urban teachers change and develop throughout their first year of teaching. It examines the concerns and needs of three first year urban teachers and their level of preparedness to teach in the urban classroom. This study explores how first year urban teachers approached their classrooms, how they adjusted during their first year of teaching, and how their teacher preparation program experience influenced the way they teach. It also examines changes in first year teachers' self efficacy, effective urban teacher characteristics, and their desire to teach in urban settings.

The selected prospective teachers completed a written pretest of the Urban Teacher Selection Interview developed by Haberman (1996). Haberman's interview is based on over forty years of

extensive research in schools on teachers who are successful in urban classrooms. The Teacher Selection Interview measures attributes and skills of prospective teachers who are likely to be successful in teaching children in urban schools (Haberman, 1995). This study followed teachers through their first year of teaching, looking at teachers' self-efficacy, as measured in September, January, and May of the school year utilizing The Teacher Efficacy Scale by Woolfolk & Hoy (1990). A survey, developed for this investigation and based upon the literature, measured teacher levels of satisfaction with aspects of their first teaching job, preparedness to teach, how well their teacher preparation program prepared them to teach, attitudes about learning, where they are willing to teach, and where they are currently teaching. The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory developed by Burke, Christensen, Fessler, McDonnell, & Price (1987) helped identify stages of teacher growth. Ethnographic interviews and teacher development models also clarified data about how first year teachers progress through developmental stages.

### *Research Questions*

The following questions are addressed in this study.

1. What are the concerns of three first year teachers who teach in urban schools as measured by monthly ethnographic interviews?
2. What resources do three urban teachers utilize to meet the challenges of teaching during their first year as measured by monthly ethnographic interviews and principal interviews?
3. How do these potentially effective teachers in urban settings adjust to their first year of teaching as measured by monthly ethnographic interviews and principal interviews?

4. How do three first year teachers perceive the usefulness of their Professional Development School preparation program for preparing them to teach in their current classroom settings as indicated by a teacher survey and monthly ethnographic interviews?

5. In what aspects do three urban teachers change during their first year of teaching as measured by the Teacher Efficacy Scale, teacher survey, and The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory?

6. What characteristics do these potentially effective first year urban teachers exhibit while they develop professionally as indicated by monthly ethnographic interviews and principal interviews, the Teacher Efficacy Scale, and The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory?

7. How motivated are three first year teachers to continue to teach in an urban setting as measured by the monthly ethnographic interviews and teacher survey?

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Further research is needed on how to better prepare (Cummings, 1986; Comer, 1988; Zeichner, 1990, 1992) and retain teachers (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1986) in urban schools. Because of the continued high attrition rate of beginning teachers, states and districts need to reexamine how to prepare, hire, and support teachers during their first, few decisive years (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Research detailing teacher experiences over the course of their first year of teaching is needed in order to provide organized knowledge about existing urban student teaching programs (Veenman, 1984). This study seeks to provide knowledge on how to prepare and to meet the needs of first year urban teachers. There are a variety of new programs designed to attract more qualified teachers to urban areas (Haberman, 1996), but there is little

research that follows these kinds of programs beyond the student teaching environment (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). Focusing on one program, a Professional Development School, this study followed three potentially effective urban teacher graduates into their first year of teaching to observe the program's impact on how these three new teachers cope with typical first year challenges. The study also examined the extent to which Professional Development School experiences influenced three potentially effective urban teacher graduates' transition into the teaching profession.

This study followed three participants identified by specific characteristics as potentially effective urban teachers to examine how they cope with first year transitions and to identify strategies and interventions which could be used to help others facilitate the same transitions. Understanding how three urban first year teachers reflect on their teaching, and the kinds of problems they have and how they solve them, will help school districts and universities to create more effective urban teacher preparation programs. This study also provides insight into how schools and districts can facilitate first year teacher professional development and classroom adaptation. Learning from teachers who are potentially effective may provide insight into their orientation, the ways they meet challenges, the needs of first year urban teachers, and how preservice training may be enhanced to help future teachers to improve the quality of education for urban school students.

#### *Significance of the Study*

In 1996, the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future recommended that colleges and schools work together to redesign teacher education programs so that the two million new

teachers required over the next decade are prepared adequately and have access to effective learning opportunities. Urban schools are hit hardest with the challenge of finding qualified teachers (Eubanks, 1996). Teaching in an urban setting is very different from teaching in the suburbs (Guyton, 1994; Haberman, 1996). Therefore, investigating the concerns and development of potentially effective first year urban teachers and how they evolve during their first year of teaching, has implications for urban teacher professional training, and for the ways school districts and university preparation programs support urban teacher development.

The National Center for Education Information surveyed over three thousand teachers nationwide, and found that they did not think they were very well prepared for their first teaching assignment (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). Teachers felt that the preparation programs least prepared them in the areas of recognizing student learning styles, classroom management/discipline, and working effectively within the school organization (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). In contrast, research has shown that preservice teachers who have been involved in a Professional Development School felt more confident in their knowledge and skills and therefore experienced less culture shock when they first entered the classroom (Book, 1996, Tusin, 1995). They also had lower attrition rates during their first years of teaching (Hayes & Wetherill, 1996; Fleener, 1998).

Further areas of study in the Professional Development School model of teacher preparation can be highlighted on what is significant to first year teachers in urban settings and possibly modify their programs to better prepare future teachers. This

study also may provide useful information and data to universities and public schools that form teacher education partnerships. Program evaluation is an essential characteristic in teacher education (Galluzzo & Craig, 1996). This study provides information on the needs of three first year teachers as they met the challenges of teaching in an urban setting. The findings from this study can be used to help evolve Professional Development School programs and focus further research to help first year teachers with the transition and shock associated with the first year of teaching. It is necessary to understand the experiences of first year teachers in urban schools to help inform school districts about recruitment, induction, and retention of beginning teachers (Chester, 1991). Teachers who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to continue teaching. Using these findings, urban schools could reduce the amount of spending on recruitment of teachers, freeing additional funds for improving the quality of teaching and learning for children. Increased knowledge therefore, on what effective teachers in urban schools need during their first year and how their teacher preparation program influenced their first year of teaching has the potential to increase teacher effectiveness.

### *Definition of Terminology*

Professional Development Schools- the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education drafted the following standards for Professional Development Schools (1997):

Collaboration between schools, colleges or departments of education, P-12 schools, school districts, and union/professional associations. The partnering

institutions share responsibility for (1) the clinical preparation of new teachers; (2) the continuing development of school and university faculty; (3) the support of children's learning; and (4) the support of research directed at the improvement of teaching and learning. (p. 5)

First year teachers- teachers in their initial professional teaching position following graduation (Johnston & Ryan, 1983).

Urban- "A large, diverse population living close together with a highly specialized and interdependent economy; describes a social, economic, and cultural, but not necessarily governmental, entity" (Christensen, 1995, p.34). O'Sullivan (1990) states that in order for an area to be urban, there should be a high concentration or density of people living within a small area. This area is also identified by signs of poverty and urban transition. For this study urban schools will refer to those schools where at least 40% of the individuals qualify for Aid for Families with Dependent Children (U.S. Census Bureau, as cited in Olson & Jerald, 1998).

Urban Students- Haberman (1996) states that urban is commonly used as a catchall term for identifying conditions that are perceived as undesirable, such as poverty, violence, crime, drug use, dysfunctional families, inadequate housing, and poor schools. Many researchers characterize urban students, but there is no precise definition. For the purpose of this study, however, urban students will be students who are enrolled in public schools, where at least 40% of the individuals are minority, and qualify for Aid for Families with Dependent Children.

'Star' Teachers- Haberman (1995) defines 'star teachers' as teachers who, by all common criteria, are outstandingly

successful. Their students score high on standardized tests; parents and children think they are great; principals rate them highly; other teachers regard them as outstanding; central office supervisors consider them successful; cooperating universities regard them as superior; and they evaluate themselves as outstanding teachers (p. 1).

Fifteen characteristics of effective urban teachers identified by Haberman are: (1) Persistence, (2) Protecting Children's Learning, (3) Putting Ideas into Practice, (4) Approach to "At-Risk" Children, (5) Professional-Personal Orientation to Students, (6) The Bureaucracy, (7) Fallibility, (8) Emotional and Physical Stamina, (9) Organizational Ability, (10) Explanation of Teacher Success, (11) Explanation of Childrens' Success, (12) Real Teaching, (13) Making Students Feel Needed, (14) The Material vs. The Student, and (15) Gentle Teaching in a Violent Society (Haberman, 1995).

Teacher-efficacy- Two components of teacher efficacy have been identified. (1) General teaching efficacy reflects a general belief that the power of teaching to reach difficult children is associated with teacher attitudes toward education. (2) Personal teaching efficacy appears to be a more accurate indicator of a teacher's personal sense of efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984). In this study, the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) was utilized to determine general and personal teacher efficacy.

Developmental stages of teaching- a process of development over time (Burden, 1986). Teachers' early personal experiences and personal development influence who they are and who they become as teachers (Raymond, Butt, & Townsend, 1992).



Skill Acquisition approach to teacher development- this approach focuses on the skills and tasks specific to teaching identified by Berliner (1988). There are five stages of skill development: (1) Novice, (2) Advanced Beginner, (3) Competent, (4) Proficient, and (5) Expert.

Reorientation of Concerns approach to teacher development- this approach utilizes Fuller's (1969) model where teachers follow a systematic pattern of change that consists of three phases of concerns: preteaching, early teaching, and late teaching.

Life Cycle approach to teacher development- this approach focuses on teaching as a whole from induction to retirement (Moreira, 1996). It identifies the personal and organizational factors that influence the career. The model has no stages, but is viewed as a process.

#### *Limitations and Delimitations*

The limitations and delimitations of this study are as follows:

1. This study examines the perceptions of three teachers that have been involved in the teacher education programs at Williams University or Robertson University (pseudonyms). The findings of this study are limited to the population of this study and the characteristics of these Professional Development Schools.

2. After completing their preparation program, the teachers accepted first year teaching positions in different buildings and settings. The researcher could not adjust for all differences in a school building.

3. Prospective effective urban teachers were identified by Haberman using his scheme through the written pretest for Urban Teacher Selection Interview. This study does not intend to

validate the identified effective urban teacher characteristics as offered by Haberman.

4. This study followed only three potentially effective urban elementary teachers involved in a Professional Development School teacher preparation program. This study may not apply to other first year teachers.

5. The design of this study was limited to following three teachers through their first year of teaching.

6. This study focused on Skill Acquisition, Reorientation of Concerns, and Life Cycle models and their approach to teacher development. Only these theoretical models were explored to examine if they apply to urban first year teachers.

### *Summary*

The National Commission on Teaching & America's Future has called for school reform to begin with the reform of the teaching profession. "Student learning in this country will improve only when we focus our efforts on improving teaching" (p. 6). Urban schools struggle to attract and retain highly qualified and committed teachers (Jones & Sandidge, 1997).

Professional Development Schools have responded to the need to revitalize teacher education (Abdal-Haqq, 1998) and to improve the quality of education for students in urban schools. Understanding the developmental stages through which urban teachers progress may help uncover how they cope with the challenges of teaching during their first year. This knowledge may help teacher preparation programs better prepare new teachers for the urban setting and increase the number of teachers willing to remain in urban schools.

## Chapter II

### Review of Literature

#### *Introduction*

This chapter begins with current related research examining the strategies and resources required of competent first year teachers and characteristics required of effective urban teachers. Studies focusing on teacher self-efficacy also are identified and reviewed. The literature of teacher professional development then is reviewed to identify prominent teacher development models and ways those models identify developmental stages. The impact of urban placements on first year teachers then is explored, followed by a review of teacher preparation programs that build competencies in urban teaching. The chapter concludes with a review of studies showing the effects of Professional Development Schools on teacher preparation.

#### *Competent Teaching*

After reviewing the literature defining competent beginning teaching, Reynolds (1992) concluded that beginning teachers should enter the first year of teaching with the following competencies:

Knowledge of the subject matter they will teach;  
The disposition to find out about their students and school, and the ethnographic and analytic skills to do so;  
Knowledge of strategies, techniques, and tools for creating and sustaining a learning community, and the skills and abilities to employ these strategies, techniques, and tools;  
Knowledge of pedagogy appropriate for the content area they will teach; and, The disposition to reflect on their own actions and students' responses in order to improve their teaching, and the strategies and tools for doing so. (p. 26)

Reynolds organizes the components of teaching into preactive teaching tasks, interactive teaching tasks, and postactive teaching tasks. Preactive teaching tasks consist of planning, creating lessons, understanding students, and knowing student differences. Interactive teaching tasks consist of teachers actively engaging students in teaching and learning, creating and managing the learning environment, presenting the subject matter, and evaluating student learning. Postactive teaching tasks consist of teachers reflecting on their own teaching and students' responses.

Competent teachers create classrooms in which students want to learn. They seek to understand their students in order to create and sustain a learning community. They maximize the time students spend actively involved in meaningful academic activities, minimize off-task behavior, and find ways to establish and maintain rules and routines that are fair and appropriate to all (Reynolds, 1992). Beginning teachers may have difficulty establishing learning-filled classrooms. They are unable to think holistically and have difficulty interpreting a class environment, and establishing workable rules and routines (Sabers, Cushing, & Berliner, 1991).

Beginning teachers spend more time focusing on preactive teaching tasks as compared to experienced teachers. Planning is more time consuming for new teachers since they focus mostly on the development of concrete strategies and activities. Beginning teachers' plans lack the contingency plans common to more experienced teachers' planning (Borko & Livingston, 1989; Borko, Livingston, McCaleb, & Mauro, 1988; Housner & Griffey, 1985; Ropo, 1987). Beginning teachers seem to understand the need for creating

lessons that are appropriate for the subject matter and the students, but seem to create lessons in superficial ways (Schram, Feiman-Nemser, & Ball 1989). They often do not know their subject matter well enough to explain it fully; they have trouble seeing the pedagogical implications of student differences; and they are often unable to tailor materials and instruction to individual students (Paine, 1989).

Competent teachers communicate clear expectations to students and relate new learning to past learning and experiences (Anderson, 1986; Conoley, 1988; Gettinger, 1986; Taylor & Valentine, 1985). Competent teachers focus on the important aspects of instructional activities and materials. They assess student needs and adapt instruction accordingly (Anderson & Pigford, 1988; Brophy & Good, 1986; Gettinger, 1986; Taylor & Valentine, 1985). The climate in a competent teacher's classroom is conducive to learning and fits the academic task (Conoley, 1988; Ward, 1987). Competent teachers use a variety of appropriate means to represent and present the subject matter. They work along the continuum from teacher directed to student directed. Their teaching methods enable students to develop metacognitive strategies that will help them continue to learn and interact with the content (Porter & Brophy, 1988). Competent teachers also maintain consistent accountability procedures and provide appropriate interventions to improve student learning (Brophy & Good, 1986; Porter & Brophy, 1988). Because of the lack of well-developed instructional routines and a meager understanding of content-specific pedagogy beginning teachers often have difficulty executing all classroom tasks smoothly (Reynolds, 1992).

Competent teachers evaluate their own teaching effectiveness to improve their instruction as they reflect on their own actions and student responses (Porter & Brophy, 1988). Beginning teachers' reflections tend to be less focused. To a beginning teacher everything that goes on in a classroom seems important and worthy of comment. Beginning teachers have difficulty focusing on what is instructionally important because they have not fully developed schemata for organizing large quantities of information gathered during classroom experiences (Reynolds, 1992). Reflection and collaboration may help beginning teachers make meaning out of classroom experiences.

### *Effective Urban Teachers*

Haberman, for over forty years, has studied what defines teachers who are successful with students and what makes others fail. He has completed over one thousand interviews with 'star' teachers to examine how 'star' teachers think and behave differently than those teachers who fail with students or leave the teaching profession. Haberman, in his work with selecting 'star' teachers, identified fifteen characteristics of effective urban teachers which he compared to the characteristics of teachers who left the profession or were not successful. Effective urban teachers have a very clear ideology, perform functions that those who leave the profession, or are unsuccessful, do not perform, and know why they do what they do. Haberman identified the following traits among effective urban teachers. Effective urban teachers have persistence, continually protect learners and learning, and are able to apply generalizations of basic learning principles to help their students achieve; they approach at risk students differently, accepting a primary responsibility for

creating a desire to learn in their students; and they possess a professional versus personal orientation to students. Effective urban teachers use support systems as sources of emotional sustenance. Additionally, effective urban teachers accept the mistakes of students, as well as their own fallibilities (Haberman 1995).

Effective urban teachers have the organizational ability to plan and the competence to gather materials that are appropriate to the learning tasks. They also have the physical and emotional stamina to persist in situations characterized by crises. Effective urban teachers engage in coaching rather than directive teaching, highlighting the successes and efforts of students. They have an ability to approach student involvement by first establishing rapport. Star teachers believe that all children have a right to be in the classroom, and they can teach children at various levels of achievement in the same classroom (Haberman, 1995).

Effective urban teachers believe it is their responsibility to find ways of engaging all students in learning activities. Teachers persist in trying to meet all the individual needs of students by constantly looking at what works best with each student. Effective teachers are typically immersed in an environment in which they continually learn. They, therefore, can explain the learning principles that underlie their work, as well as the long-range goals that they are helping their students achieve. They also support relevant curricula and more effective teaching strategies as issues that schools and teachers should be held accountable for when approaching at risk students. Effective urban teachers have a sense of personal responsibility and

commitment. They have genuine respect for their students and they feel that it is their responsibility to spark their students' desire to learn. These effective urban teachers set up networks as sources of emotional support (Haberman, 1995).

Zeichner (1993) compiled a report for the National Center of Research on Teacher Learning on how to work effectively with a diverse student populations. Zeichner reviewed educational literature, journals, and through personal contacts to identify characteristics of successful urban teachers. Across these studies teachers hold high expectations, have knowledge of how to involve parents, and a good understanding of the school's community. They utilize a wide variety of teaching strategies, and promote an inclusive multicultural curriculum. Successful urban teachers possess a need to be involved in the broader political struggles for achieving a more just and humane society.

Peterson, Bennet and Sherman (1991) identified twelve successful teachers working in a large metropolitan school district with significant numbers of at risk students. Teachers were selected for the study by being nominated and confirmed by administrators, teachers, and directors of special programs. The researchers found that successful teachers of at risk students share some similar characteristics. They create a place of belonging and identity for their students, have an identifiable academic program which at times is interrupted for student problems, and utilize explicit coaching strategies for students. There is a high level of expectation and personal accountability for each student. These teachers have an identifiable theme with a clear emphasis on one approach or set of goals. Successful teachers have a prior vision or recognition that they have the



capacity to work with at risk students. In fact, Peterson, Bennet and Sherman found that each teacher described a strong core background or experience that prepared them for success in the classroom. Effective teachers utilize small groups and small classes in order to manage their curriculum and classroom routines. The teachers identified were successful for a number of reasons and not for just one strategy or approach. Therefore, successful teachers should not be expected to use the same instructional strategies and materials (Peterson, Bennett & Sherman, 1991).

Baron, Rusnak, Brookhart, Burrett, and Whordley (1992) conducted a literature review of empirical studies to identify behavior and practices demonstrated by effective urban teachers. They found successful urban teachers have identifiable behaviors and practices when teaching and interacting with students. The search identified two broad areas of competence: internal effects and external effects. Internal effects are observable behaviors exhibited by successful urban teachers while in a classroom or school setting. The internal effects are issues that focus on school or classroom practices. The internal effects of successful urban teachers are active teaching, positive classroom management, a variety of teaching methods, the capacity to plan and sequence instruction, effective interpersonal skills, high efficacy and expectations, and applicability to real-life situations. External effects are practices that urban teachers pursue outside the school to help produce success. The external effects are community and family support, and a knowledge of urban and multiethnic sociology.

Teachers in urban classrooms must expect achievement from the

students and believe that their teaching will make a difference. An effective urban teacher creates a positive classroom environment, builds lessons on the experience of students, and makes learning meaningful. Effective urban teachers also involve families and are sensitive to the social factors that influence multiethnic students (Baron, Rusnak, Brookhart, Burrett, and Whordley, 1992).

### *First Year Teacher Challenges*

First year teachers go through a variety of emotions during their first weeks on the job (McDonald & Elias, 1983). At the beginning, they are very proud that they were successful in landing their first job. However, the feeling of euphoria quickly subsides when they are faced with the many unforeseen challenges of teaching (Ryan, 1979; Bullough, 1987). Teaching is the only profession in which the expectations for a first year teacher are the same as those for a veteran of 20 years (Apelman, 1978). Many beginning teachers are learning to teach in isolation, in situations and climates not conducive to developing effective teaching skills (Deal & Chatman, 1989). Thus, they find themselves in unfamiliar school systems and in difficult positions that no other teachers want (Runyan, 1990). For many, the transition from teacher training to the first job is so traumatic that it is often referred to as a "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984). Ayers (1980) affirmed the challenges of teaching when he found that it takes three or four years on the job for many teachers to settle into a stable pattern of teaching.

Veenman's (1984) "reality shock" could be the result of many variables. Ryan (1979) claimed that beginning teachers have difficulty in their first year because they are essentially

untrained for the demands of their work. Ryan also found that there is no clear selection criteria in teacher training. Beginning teachers, with only general training, are required to do specific jobs in specific schools. This disconnect causes many problems for first year teachers.

In 1984, Veenman reviewed the results of 83 studies that had appeared in journals since 1960 on the perceived problems of beginning teachers. The eight problems perceived most often were: (1) providing classroom discipline, (2) motivating students, (3) dealing with individual differences, (4) assessing students' work, (5) developing relationships with parents, (6) organizing class work, (7) coping with insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials and supplies, and (8) handling the problems of individual students. Classroom discipline was the most serious problem perceived by beginning teachers. In this same review, perceptions of the principals about the problems of first year teachers were that beginning teachers had problems with classroom discipline, dealing with individual differences, motivating students, and using the most effective teaching methods (Veenman, 1984). Veenman reviewed studies that varied in school systems, teacher preparation programs, and the working environments of beginning teachers. Despite these differences the problems beginning teachers faced were similar.

Beginning teachers are often unprepared to meet the challenges during their first year of teaching. In most business organizations the socialization of new employees is highly valued. Orientation for new employees focuses on quality, service, and the culture of the company. Employees not meeting the standards are encouraged to find employment elsewhere. The socialization of new

teachers, however, is very different. Covert (1986) studied ninety-four first-year teachers to measure their attitudes toward teaching, methods, and technical competency. Covert found that new teachers rarely learned the history or values of their school or district. Furthermore, most teachers are oriented to policies, procedures, and the curriculum rather than to philosophy or pedagogy (Deal & Chatman, 1989). Too often the first few weeks of a new teachers's job are without the support of the principal and/or other colleagues; the new teacher is left alone to struggle in the classroom and to find his or her own way.

Cochran-Smith (1991) advocated that preservice teachers work in a program that is committed to the development of "collaborative resonance" that provide opportunities to learn from teaching communities. These communities are composed of cooperating teachers, university professors, program directors, student teachers, and supervisors. The community's twin purpose is to honor the knowledge and expertise of those individuals who have invested their professional lives in education and to emulate this knowledge and expertise in classroom practices. Although, Cochran-Smith cautions that just lengthening the duration of the student teaching experience does not increase the success of the new teacher, she recommended student teaching placements last a full year, allowing for continuity of discussions and for the support that each student teacher needs.

Covert (1986) identified first year teachers and sent questionnaires to address their attitudes towards teaching, methodological and technical competencies, and the adequacy of their teaching preparation program. Ninety-four teachers responded and found that increasing the length of the practicum experience

did not significantly influence teacher competence. What Covert did find was that the teaching environment encountered by the first year teacher is more important than any of the preservice experiences measured in his study. Covert's findings underline the importance of the administration and supervision of first year teachers as critical to the quality of their initial teaching experience, and suggests that more attention should be given to the interactions between the institution and its new teachers.

In addition to Covert (1986), Chester (1992) conducted a qualitative study of five first year teachers teaching in urban schools to identify alterable factors that mediate the first year of teaching. Chester utilized observations, interviews, and large scale survey data to understand first year teacher experiences. Chester examined four perspectives that teachers commonly face throughout their first year: adult socialization, reality shock, attitude and efficacy changes, and teacher concerns. By promoting opportunities for collaboration, schools simultaneously encourage adult socialization which fostered successful teamwork. Chester found that placing younger, beginning teachers in schools with cultures that have a strong collegial norm enhanced the beginning teachers' beliefs that they have the ability to influence the growth of their students. Teachers also benefit from working with encouraging administrators who show interest in their instructional performance. All of the first year teachers that Chester (1992) studied struggled with the reality shock that is common to beginning teachers. His study supported the notion that moving from preservice to the first year of teaching creates a need for teachers to bridge the gap between what they know and what they need to know.

The concept that attitude and efficacy change during the first year was also supported by Chester's findings. Teachers reported a range of self-efficacy changes. The younger beginning teachers experienced the most substantial declines in efficacy. The teachers in Chester's study shared the same concerns identified by Veenman (1984). Veenman in his review of the literature since 1960 found eight problems that are common to most beginning teachers (see Table 2). The three problems that ranked highest were classroom discipline, motivating students, and dealing with individual differences among students. An understanding of beginning teachers' challenges provides a starting point for designing interventions to guide, and enhance teacher development (Veenman, 1984). The findings of both Chester and Veenman suggest that with timely professional interventions, urban schools can affect first year teachers' experiences positively.

Table 2

First Year Teacher Challenges (Veenman)

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Classroom Discipline

Motivating Students

Dealing with Individual Differences

Assessing Student Work

Relationships with Parents

Organization of Class Work

Insufficient and/or Inadequate Teaching

Dealing with Problems of Individual Students

Materials and Supplies

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Because teachers face numerous adjustments during their initial year, school districts and universities should attempt to find interventions and strategies to help them adapt. Teachers who survive their first year of teaching are more likely to continue to teach for many more years (Murnane et al., 1991). Long and Morrow (1995) completed an experimental study of 16 student teachers placed at a Professional Development School and a control group of 16 student teachers who completed a traditional teacher preparation program. Long and Morrow found that teachers who had completed their student teaching program in a Professional Development School were found to be better prepared for their first year of teaching than student teachers from traditional schools.

### *Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy has been defined as one's beliefs in one's abilities to perform a particular behavior (Pontius, 1998). When applied to teachers, self-efficacy is a belief that they have the confidence to affect students' performance. Teachers show confidence when they perform specific tasks and have definite beliefs about the causes of student performance (Pajares, 1992). The belief in one's ability to teach can help promote success in the first stages of a teaching career (Pontius, 1998).

Therefore, it would be prudent for teacher preparation programs to provide experiences designed to increase teachers' feelings of self-efficacy. Cole (1995) followed 82 student teachers prior to and after their clinical experiences. Nineteen participants completed 6 hours of clinical placement and 63 completed 32 hours of clinical placement. Students completing an extended field experience showed an increase in their feelings of

personal efficacy after the end of their field experience. The students who completed a shorter clinical experience did not therefore, extending the length of field experience was one strategy found to help increase first year teachers efficacy (Cole, 1995). Schools that offered opportunities for new teachers to reflect on teaching and learning with their colleagues had a positive impact on new teacher self-efficacy beliefs.

Additionally, administrators and teachers who collaborated together also showed increased self-efficacy (Chester & Beaudin, 1996). These findings were found when Chester and Beaudin collected survey responses from 173 newly hired urban teachers.

Several studies have indicated the effect of changes in self-efficacy during the first year of teaching. Glassberg (1979) reported a positive correlation between self efficacy beliefs, the level of cognitive functioning, and effective teaching strategies. In contrast, Gaede (1987) found that teachers' rating of self-assessed professional knowledge declined during the first year. Soodak and Podell (1997) examined the efficacy beliefs of 626 elementary and secondary preservice teachers and of practicing teachers with various levels of teaching experience using a cross-sectional design. Soodak and Podell found that among elementary school teachers personal efficacy was high during the preservice period, but fell dramatically in the first years of teaching.

Self-efficacy is a complex subject which may partly explain conflicting research results. Differences in results could be attributed to the differences in the subjects or in the context in which the study occurred. Woolfolk and Hoy (1993) examined 179 teachers who were randomly selected from 37 elementary schools to examine the relationship between two dimensions of teacher



efficacy, general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy. General teaching efficacy reflects a belief in the power of teaching to reach difficult children and has more in common with teacher attitudes toward education. Personal teaching efficacy is an individual's belief about their ability to affect the desired results through the execution of personal action and appears to be a more accurate indicator of a teacher's personal sense of efficacy.

Guskey and Passaro's (1994) research sampled 342 prospective and experienced teachers with an efficacy questionnaire. Their study supported the earlier research findings that teacher efficacy is a multidimensional construct. Guskey and Passaro (1994) found two dimensions of teacher efficacy that represent internal and external orientations. Internal efficacy is the perception of personal influence, power, and impact in the classroom. External efficacy is the perception of influence, power, and impact of elements that lie outside the classroom and beyond the direct control of individual teachers. Some examples of external efficacy may include social, demographic, or economic conditions that affect students' lives. Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) found the same distinction when they examined the test items on instruments to measure teacher efficacy in 182 perspective teachers enrolled in a teacher education program at a large state university.

Chester and Beaudin (1996) studied 173 teachers newly hired urban teachers and followed the relationship of change in self-efficacy beliefs, teacher characteristics, and school practices. They found that schools can influence teachers' feelings of efficacy and empowerment when they provide opportunities for

collegial interaction, when supervisors attend to the instructional dimension of teachers' roles, and when consideration is given to how resources are allocated. Schools that offer opportunities for teachers to reflect on teaching and learning with their colleagues, and for administrators and teachers to collaborate and communicate together, foster positive changes in self-efficacy beliefs for newly hired teachers (Chester & Beaudin, 1996).

Field placements of student teachers have also been found to influence self-efficacy. Cole (1995) found that 63 students completing an extended field experience (32 hours or more of clinical experience) showed an increase in their feelings of personal efficacy. Those 19 student teachers who completed a shorter clinical experience (6 hours of clinical placement) did not show a change in self efficacy scores.

#### *Strategies to Help First Year Teachers*

Teachers entering their first classroom experience full of energy and hope often experience reality shock. Thompson and Schuck (1987) explored intervention strategies that could be developed to help teachers cope more effectively with reality shock. They found that beginning teachers' morale at the end of their first-year experience was related to their own images of themselves as teachers. This self concept developed early in their teacher preparation program. Teachers who viewed themselves as active, enthusiastic, and flexible tended to have feelings of high morale at the end of the school year. Teacher creativity and persistence were also predictors of high year end morale.

Where teachers get their first job largely determines what type of support they will receive. McGuire, Klass, & Piercy (1991)

explored the relationship between district characteristics and how they provide for first year teacher staff development programs. They found that only twenty-one percent of first year teachers were involved in any first year staff development. Larger districts were more likely than smaller districts to provide staff development activities for beginning teachers. Suburban and independent city schools were more likely to offer staff development programs to beginning teachers than were urban and rural schools (McGuire et al, 1991). Therefore, teachers in urban, rural, or small districts may be less likely to participate in staff development programs during their first year.

A beginning teacher needs experience (Sabers, Cushing, & Berliner, 1991). From experience comes the ability to understand individual differences in the classroom, how creative lessons further instructional goals, and how a level of processing by the beginning teacher can be inferred from classroom cues (Berliner, 1988). First year teachers' needs are different from those of a tenth year teacher and even from those of a third year teacher (Berliner, 1988). Therefore, the type of training required will be different. School districts may need to match the type of training to where teachers are in their professional development.

#### *Developmental Stages of Teaching*

Teachers vary in their professional development levels. Teachers at different stages of their development have different needs. Teacher development researchers have applied the theory of cognitive development stages to what teachers think, how they perform, and how they use information. Understanding differences among teachers may lead to a better understanding of the structure and content of teachers' problems (Veenman, 1984). Staff

development then can be based on the needs of the teachers. Kohlberg and Mayer (1978) stated the value and use of studying developmental stages of educators when they proposed that the ...aim of the developmental educator is not the acceleration of development, but the eventual adult attainment of the highest stage. In this sense, the developmentalist is not interested in stage-acceleration, but in avoiding stage-retardation.(p.163)

Teacher development can be classified into four main theoretical models. Each of these models has an underlying philosophy that guides its approach to teacher training. The four main models are cognitive development, skill acquisition, reorientation of concerns, and life cycle (Moreira, 1996). The characteristics prominent at each of the levels identified by the teacher development models used were used to interpret and analyze the data collected on the development of first year urban teachers.

#### *Cognitive Development Model*

The cognitive-development approach incorporates the views of Piaget (1983) and Kohlberg (1984). Piaget studied child and adolescent cognitive development and noted that at each stage of development children developed new skills that corresponded to their way of thinking. He further postulated that development occurs in a series of stages that correspond to different forms of thinking. The stages are integrated, with each stage being a necessary component for the next. In this approach there is a mechanism of development that is responsible for all the developmental transitions. Finally, developmental stages are seen as universal and sequential.

The cognitive development model was not usable in this study for two reasons. First, the model came from outside the study of teachers and teaching. Second, the instruments used to assess the stages of development were not related to teaching, but to broad cognitive domains.

#### *Skill Acquisition Model*

The skill acquisition model is focused on tasks and skills specific to teaching. This model allows for the comparison of the behavioral and mental processes of beginning and expert teachers to identify the differences between the skills each group utilizes. A good example of this model is found in Berliner's (1988) work. Berliner utilized empirical data in the development of expertise in pedagogy model of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) and applied it to teaching. There are five stages of skill acquisition.

The first stage is the Novice teacher who, with experience, develops into an advanced beginner. Berliner hypothesized that novices are generally student teachers and beginning first-year teachers. The focus of teacher education colleges is the first year of teaching. They help prepare the novice teacher to acquire skills and to advance to the next stage of development. Advanced beginners, the second stage, are typically in their second and third year of teaching. Most of these individuals grow into the third stage, competent teachers, in their third or fourth year. The fourth stage is when a teacher becomes proficient. Some of the teachers who have reached the proficient stage will reach the highest stage, an expert teacher.

Throughout each stage of development there are several distinguishing characteristics. Novices are learning the elements

of the tasks that are to be performed. The novice teacher is taught the meaning of terms such as higher order questions, reinforcement, learning disabled, and cooperative learning. They are taught context-free rules such as providing three seconds of wait time after asking questions. The behavior of the novice is rational, somewhat inflexible, and conforms to established rules and procedures (Berliner, 1988). A teacher at the novice stage is gaining experience.

A teacher at the advanced beginner stage of development is becoming aware of similarities across contexts. Experience reinforces knowledge. Teachers begin to learn when to break rules and when to follow them. The advanced beginners are involved intensely in the learning process, but may lack awareness of their impact on students. For example, when students misbehave at the beginning of a lesson, advanced beginner teachers may not recognize that this poor behavior could be caused by teaching above or below their students' levels of thinking. Accepting personal responsibility for classroom instruction, personal decision making, and willingness to make choices are indicators of readiness to move to the next stage of development (Berliner, 1988).

Competent teachers have several distinguishing characteristics. They make conscious choices about what they are going to teach, set priorities, and create plans. Competent teachers have rational goals and practical means for reaching them. While teaching, they can discern what is important and what is not, and know when to expand on a topic and when to move on to other topics. Competent teachers are more intuitive about success and failure than novices or advanced beginners.

The fourth stage of development focuses on proficiency. This stage occurs when intuition or "know how" becomes prominent. Proficient teachers draw from a wealth of experience to predict events. Proficient teachers are analytical and deliberate in deciding what to do. Teachers at the highest stage of development are experts. Expert teachers have an intuitive grasp of a situation and seem to sense in nonanalytic, non-deliberative ways the appropriate response to make. They do not consciously choose how to solve problems or make decisions (Berliner, 1988).

The model was derived from the theory of acquisition of experience and supporting empirical data about the differences between experts and novices. This model has not been used in any longitudinal study that has followed teachers through all the stages of development (Moreira, 1996). Since the study being conducted only followed teachers throughout their first year of teaching, relying on one model that had not been fully researched would raise questions about the validity of the methodology and final conclusions of this study. Therefore, this study incorporated this model for teacher development, contrasting it to other theoretical models.

#### *Reorientation of Concerns Model*

The reorientation of concerns model generally is associated with Fuller's (1969) work. Fuller began observing student teachers in the late 60s and 70s and noted that they seemed to follow a systematic pattern of change. Fuller continued her research and followed student teachers over time. She observed that student teachers followed a pattern of change during their first school experience. This model consists of three phases of concerns: preteaching, early teaching, and late teaching. Piland (1990)

followed and observed how five student teachers develop. Piland found in the preteaching phase future teachers rarely had concerns about the profession of teaching. During the early teaching phase, teachers were concerned mainly about themselves, and teachers functioning at the late teaching stage of development demonstrated mature characteristics, and their concerns tended to be centered around the students' needs rather than their own (Piland, 1992).

This model has two limitations. First, the model focuses entirely on student teachers and therefore has limited generalizability to the later developmental stages. Second, it also lacks a thorough rationale for justifying the sequence of stages. There has also been no systematic examination of the evolution of concerns of beginning teachers in different contexts. This study utilized and incorporated Fuller's work into its framework to observe whether the model could be applied in urban settings. This model did validate a beginning teacher's concerns with personal adequacy issues (Moreira, 1996).

#### *Life Cycle Model*

The life cycle approach focuses on the teaching career as a whole, from induction to retirement. The difficulty of utilizing only this approach in this study lay in the length of time that it would take to notice changes and identify stages. One example of this model includes the teacher career cycle by Burke, Fessler and Christensen (1984) and Huberman (1989).

The teacher career cycle model developed by Burke, Fessler and Christensen (1984) conceptualizes the teacher's career as a cycle by identifying the personal and organizational factors that influence his or her career. This model is not one of static or fixed stages, but dynamic and flexible stages. The cycle is



affected by environmental conditions. The personal environmental influences of the teacher include family support structures, positive critical incidents, life crises, cumulative life experiences, avocational outlets, and individual dispositions. The organizational environmental influences are school regulations, the management style of administrators and supervisors, the climate of public trust, community expectations, opportunities for advancement and growth, professional associations, and labor management relations (Burke, Fessler & Christensen, 1984).

Movement through the teacher career cycle is not sequential; nor will all teachers experience all the factors in the teacher cycle. Teachers are likely to move in and out of stages in response to the personal and organizational influences occurring at a particular time. The "preservice stage" is the period of preparation. The "induction stage" describes the period when teachers are socialized into the system during their first few years of employment. Teachers may also experience induction when moving to another grade level, another building, or when changing districts (Burke, Fessler & Christensen, 1984).

A teacher is at the "competency building" stage of development when they seek out new materials, methods and strategies. During this stage, teachers willingly attend conferences and workshops and are receptive to new ideas. They perceive their jobs as challenging, and are eager to improve their skills. "Enthusiastic and growing" is another stage in the career cycle. Teachers at this stage have reached a high level of competence in their jobs, but continue to grow as professionals. In this stage, teachers love their jobs and are constantly seeking new ways to enhance their teaching. They have a high level of

enthusiasm and job satisfaction (Burke, Fessler & Christensen, 1984).

The "career frustration" stage is a period characterized by frustration and disillusionment with teaching. At this stage teachers begin to question why they are doing this work and have low job satisfaction. This stage most often occurs mid-point in one's career. "Stable", also another part of the teacher career cycle, occurs when teachers have resigned themselves to doing only what is expected of them, but little more; they are not committed to the pursuit of growth in the profession. These teachers tend to have the most difficulty in relating to professional development activities.

The "career wind-down" stage occurs when teachers are preparing to leave the profession. For some this stage may be pleasant, a period in which they reflect on positive experiences. For others, it may be an unpleasant time. Teachers may spend several weeks or several years in this stage. Finally the "career exiting" stage represents not only retirement, but also other circumstances that may cause a temporary career exit such as child rearing, elective job termination, or relocating to a nonteaching position in education (Burke, Fessler & Christensen, 1984).

Huberman (1989) conducted an empirical review of the literature on the teaching career integrating the empirical literature of adult socialization, career patterning, and life-span developmental psychology while factoring in the strong trends that occur across studies of individuals in different professions. Huberman identified seven phases: survival and discovery, stabilization, experimentation/activism, taking stock/self doubts, serenity, conservatism, and disengagement.

Teaching careers begin in the survival and discovery phase. The survival theme relates to the reality shock that is especially prevalent in teachers who have had no prior teaching experience. They struggle with the complexities of instructional management, professional ideals, the daily grind of classroom life, and fragmentation of tasks. Challenges occur at this phase: trying to create intimacy, yet professional distance with students, and trying to determine the appropriateness of instructional materials, given the diversity and needs of the students. The discovery theme translates into the excitement of teachers having their own students, their own classroom and materials, and a feeling of being a teacher among peers (Huberman, 1989).

The stabilization phase is characterized by commitment to the profession and to an administrative act of accepting tenure. Teachers affiliate in the community, are free from direct supervision, and achieve greater instructional mastery and comfort. Most teachers encounter this stage after the initial three or four years of teaching. Teachers at this stage are trying to refine, establish, and add to their own style of instruction (Huberman, 1989).

The experimentation/activism phase stresses one or more of the following three factors. The first is the gradual consolidation of an instructional repertoire in an effort to increase the impact on students. Teachers then experiment with different materials, different student groupings, and different sequencing of instruction. This is not possible during earlier stages because there is too much confusion and uncertainty about the instructional program. A second factor is the desire to increase one's impact in the classroom. The teacher is more aware

of institutionalized instructional barriers and attempts to change the flaws in the school or school district. Third, teachers may be ready for new challenges, and do not want to grow stale in the profession (Huberman, 1989).

Experimentation gives way to the stage of taking stock and introspection. Teachers in this phase struggle with continuing in or leaving the profession. This struggle usually occurs somewhere between the twelfth and the twentieth year of teaching. Teachers tend to take stock and realize what other career options are open to them (Huberman, 1989).

Another dominate theme in Huberman's analysis on teacher careers is serenity. There is a gradual loss in energy and enthusiasm that is compensated by a greater sense of confidence and self-acceptance of teachers in the 45-55 age group. Conservatism is another phase that teachers face later in their teaching careers. This usually occurs in older teachers (50-60). They tend to criticize the new generation of students as being less disciplined and less motivated than the students that they taught earlier in their careers. Teachers at the conservation stage have a more negative image of educators and school administrators, and believe there is a lack of commitment to the profession among younger colleagues. The final stage is disengagement. Teachers disengage and withdraw from teaching, and begin pursuits in other areas (Huberman, 1989).

#### *Summary of Teacher Development Models*

In this review of the literature on the different approaches to teacher development. Each model showed a gap in its theoretical framework. The cognitive development model was not usable in this study for two reasons. First the model came from outside the study

of teachers and teaching. Second the instruments used to assess the stages of development were not related to teaching, but to broad cognitive domains. The skill acquisition model has not been used in any comprehensive longitudinal studies (Moreira, 1996). The reorientation of concerns model has two limitations. First, Fuller's entire model centered around her work with student teachers, and thus has limited generalizability to the later developmental stages. Second, Fuller's model also lacks a thorough rationale for justifying the sequence of stages. There has also been no systematic examination of the evolution of concerns of beginning teachers in different contexts. The focus of the life cycle approach is the teaching career as a whole, from induction to retirement. The difficulty of utilizing only this approach in this study lay in the length of time needed to notice changes between stages.

In each of these developmental models there is an underlying philosophy of how best to prepare teachers. The skill acquisition model focuses on giving preservice teachers the skills needed to be successful. The reorientation of concerns model focuses on problems with teacher preparation and the irrelevance of the teacher education curriculum. The life cycle approach focuses on teaching as a whole and on how teachers grow and change over time. Each model was studied to determine how it contributes to an understanding of the experiences of first year teachers.

Though all models have limitations, those most useful for studying the development of first year teachers are the skill acquisition, reorientation of concerns, and the life cycle models. The identified models will offer perspective when examining issues in first year urban teachers. As shown in table 3, themes from

each model were used to describe the professional development of potentially effective first year urban teachers.

Table 3

Developmental Stages of Teaching (Moreira, 1996)

<u>Model and Stages</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>
Skill Acquisition Model	
1. Novice	Learning elements of tasks to be performed Showing rational, somewhat inflexible behavior Conforming to rules and procedures Gaining experience
2. Advanced Beginner	Becoming aware of similarities across contexts Being intensely involved in the learning process, but may lack certain responsibilities
3. Competent	Accepting personal responsibility for instruction Making conscious choices Setting priorities and deciding on plans Finding practical means for reaching goals

(table continues)

4. Proficient	Fast, flexible and fluid in behavior Using intuition Drawing from experience Being analytical and deliberate
5. Expert	Demonstrating fluid teaching Having an intuitive grasp of a situation Being nonanalytic, non-deliberative

#### Reorientation of Concerns Model

1. Preteaching	Rarely having specific concerns related to teaching Thinking of teaching in terms of their own experiences
2. Early Teaching	Showing concern with themselves Dealing with adequacy issues
3. Late Teaching	Focusing on students' needs Engaging in self evaluation is more important than personal gain and evaluations by others

(table continues)

## Life Cycle Model

### 1. Preservice

Preparing for a specific professional role, typically the initial teacher preparation, but also includes retraining for a new role or assignment

### 2. Induction

Socializing into the system  
Striving for acceptance by students, peers, and supervisors

Attempting to achieve comfort and security in dealing with everyday problems and issues

### 3. Competency Building

Striving to improve teaching skills and abilities

Seeking out new materials, methods, and strategies

Willingly attending workshops and conferences

Eagerly seeking to expand their repertoire of skills

### 4. Career Frustration

Experiencing frustration and disillusionment with teaching

Experiencing low job satisfaction

(table continues)



5. Career Wind-down	Preparing to leave the profession Reflecting on career
6. Career Exit	Time after teacher leaves job

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Some research has been conducted on what creates movement or development in teaching. Piland (1992) examined the developmental stages of elementary student teachers, and found that movement within developmental stages occurred when questions were answered and the unknowns about teaching became familiar. Movement through stages becomes evident once student teachers began to develop teaching skills and receive successful evaluations. The researchers that developed the Teacher Career Cycle model stated that movement between stages occurs when teachers respond to the personal and organizational influences of their professional environment (Burke, Fessler, & Christensen, 1984). Berliner (1988), an advocate of the skill acquisition model, observed that advancement happens when expertise has been achieved in a particular stage.

#### *Teacher Preparation*

Typically new teachers report that their preparation program did not provide them with all the skills needed to work effectively (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). In 1990, The National Center for Education Information conducted a survey of 3,201 teachers in both public and private settings, asking them about their preparation. Those surveyed agree that a combination of college course work and field based experiences would be the best way to prepare new teachers.

Teacher preparation programs at institutions and colleges bear the main responsibility for preparing effective teachers (Jones & Sandidge, 1997). This accountability includes "recruiting and retaining diverse teachers, preparing teachers to work with all students, adopting multicultural curriculum and instruction, . . . and examining policies and practices that impede equal access, equal outcomes, and equity in urban schools (p. 200)".

Teacher education and induction programs must be restructured to ensure that beginning teachers have an adequate knowledge base before they take on full-time responsibility for students' learning (Reynolds, 1992). Learning to teach requires a great deal of time. Unfortunately, many prospective teachers are not provided with sufficient structured experiences that will facilitate the development of expertise. To better help beginning teachers gain that experience, researchers offer several suggestions: Sabers, Cushing and Berliner (1991) suggest longer opportunities for new teachers to observe, reflect, and discuss their observations to develop the pedagogical expertise necessary for beginning teachers.

Darling-Hammond (1996) suggested incorporating new understandings of teaching and learning into teacher preparation programs, with more attention being focused on learning and cognition of students. Teacher preparation programs also need to focus on the importance of developing a reflective, problem-solving orientation by engaging prospective teachers in teacher research, school-based inquiry, and inquiry into student experiences.

Haberman (1994) has been an advocate for urban schools and teachers. He has stated that traditional teacher education does

not meet the urban teachers needs for five reasons: (1) the assumption that there is one knowledge base is nonsense; (2) the commitment to universal licenses overstates teachers' qualifications; (3) the emphasis on doctoral level training rather than on demonstrated teaching competence for teacher educators perpetuates ignorance; (4) selection criteria for traditional teacher education programs are irrelevant; and (5) future teachers in traditional programs are typically late adolescents or young adults. The age range for students in traditional education programs, 18-25, is not the most appropriate life stage for learning to teach.

Haberman (1994) believes that preparation programs should actively recruit individuals who have reached maturity. For Haberman, persons in their late twenties-early thirties are the best candidates for teaching. Candidates should demonstrate the ability to establish rapport with low income children and youth of diverse ethnic backgrounds. They should be assessed using valid and reliable interviews that predict their success with children in poverty. Practicing classroom teachers recognized as effective by their peers should be involved in making candidate selection decisions (Haberman, 1993).

Several scholars have identified principles of excellence that should guide teacher education preparation programs. The offering of substantive content in teacher education programs needs to occur on-site in a functioning school (Zeichner, 1993). This includes schools serving impoverished children and youth from diverse backgrounds, since traditional programs do not prepare teachers for cultural diversity (Guyton, 1994). Preservice teachers need to learn to teach by functioning in the role of

teacher and being responsible for the full range of tasks and duties required of practicing teachers (Haberman, 1994). Teaching is best taught by a process of coaching, with the coach being a practicing teacher released from his or her own classroom to coach beginners on a full-time basis.

The Professional Development School was conceived as a way to transform teaching. Professional Development Schools provide ways to provide practice for student teachers with a strong emphasis on coaching and collaboration.

#### *Professional Development Schools*

The term, Professional Development School, originated with the Holmes Group (1986) in *Tomorrow's Teachers*. The Professional Development School concept was elaborated further in *Tomorrow's Schools* (1990) which used the medical profession's teaching hospital as a model. The Holmes Group was organized in 1986 as a consortium of nearly 100 American research universities committed to making teacher preparation programs more rigorous. In *Tomorrow's Schools*, the Holmes Group sets out its ambitious aims as follows:

. . . to contribute to intellectually solid programs of teacher education that intertwine the wisdom of theory and practice; that encourage shared conceptions among university and school faculty; that assist novices in evaluating, integrating, and using knowledge from multiple sources; that convey the moral basis of teaching; and that recruit and keep imaginative and interesting teachers in the profession (p.48).

Currently there are over 1,000 Professional Development Schools. Each setting is distinctive with restructuring efforts modeling

best practices that support positive social academic development for students and improved practice for teachers (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). To date, there have been few studies linking Professional Development Schools with teacher development, especially as it applies to the developmental stages of teaching.

Studies of Professional Development School teacher preparation programs in the 1990's recorded positive results. Stallings (1991) examined 44 student teachers in a Professional Development School setting and 25 student teachers in a traditional setting as a control group. Stallings found that ninety percent of student teachers who completed preparation programs in urban Professional Development Schools would welcome the opportunity to teach in an inner city school.

Morris and Munnery (1994) researched a Professional Development elementary school with 32 teachers and compared it to data collected from 82 teachers at four other elementary schools. Teachers felt an increase in their confidence and their ability to help students who were at risk for school failure after working in a Professional Development School setting. Long and Morrow (1995) conducted an experimental study with 16 student teachers placed at Professional Development Schools and 16 student teachers who completed a traditional teacher preparation program. They found Professional Development School graduates felt that they were better prepared for their first year of teaching than graduates from traditional student teaching programs (Long & Morrow, 1995).

### *Urban Schools*

Currently, in most teacher education programs, teacher candidates are taught theories and principles that are universal

in nature. For example, childhood and adolescent development apply to all children; thus effective teaching strategies typically are taught in such a way as to be applicable to all students and are not differentiated for those students that are from urban areas or from different cultures. Some authors criticize this as they view urban teaching as distinctive, possessing its own teaching pedagogy (Haberman, 1996, Guyton, 1994).

Urban learners are capable, motivated, resilient, and able to build on their cultural strengths (Williams & Woods, 1997). This statement rejects current perceptions that urban children are at risk, lacking abilities, unmotivated, and culturally deprived. Knowing the learners and building on their strengths will improve instruction and educational outcomes. To help address the urban learner, the staff at Research for Better Schools developed the Urban Learner Framework after reviewing the literature, consulting with other educators, and testing theories in practice. The framework categorizes research and theory that looks at urban students and emphasizes the differences, experiences, and strengths that urban students bring to school. Effective urban teachers utilize a lesson infusion process that involves four steps: (1) using subject matter to determine what to teach; (2) making a connection between students' experiences and curriculum content; (3) further student learning by beginning the lesson with an activity relating to the strengths students bring and building on those strengths with activities that draw on their experiences; (4) reflecting on the instructional experience to note new insights and considerations for change.

The first step is critical because the instructional objectives establish the foundation for subsequent decisions that

influence the quality of the learning experience. Student experiences are rich with examples that can be utilized to create powerful cognitive, emotional, and cultural connections between the learner and the content. Effective urban teachers incorporate the student into the curriculum by providing activities that center on the learning event and the student's own experiences. Reflection provides opportunities to make connections, to experiment with new ideas, and to make better instructional decisions.

Waxman & Huang (1997) conducted research on the differences between effective and ineffective urban elementary schools. They chose eight elementary schools in a large urban district that had predominately African American students from economically disadvantaged students. The schools were classified as effective and ineffective based on the state rating system according to scores on a statewide assessment of basic skills. Four schools were randomly selected from the population of effective schools and four from the population of ineffective schools. The results showed that students from effective urban schools worked in individual settings, interacted with their teacher, and worked on written assignments significantly more than those students from ineffective schools. The students from effective schools also reported significantly higher achievement motivation, academic self-concept, task orientation, rule clarity, and student aspiration scores. These differences point to a need to carefully prepare and to place teachers wisely in urban classrooms.

Guyton (1994) studied first year teaching experiences of four urban teachers to determine the implications of the urban environment for teacher education. She concluded that urban

teachers need more education on developing the social skills of students and more information about poverty and ethnic cultures. Urban teachers need opportunities to get to know the parents of their students, and to develop interpersonal skills that enable them to deal with rejection, discouragement, and frustration. Universities need to educate teachers to work in the urban context, and urban student teachers need to learn how to adapt to that environment.

Many Professional Development Schools are designed to meet the needs of teachers and administrators who work in the most challenging school settings (Stallings, 1991). The Houston Independent School District and the College of Education at Texas A & M University formed a Professional Development School partnership. They found that creating a Professional Development School in their district better prepared preservice teachers for urban schools. The district wanted to develop effective teachers who were willing to teach in inner city schools. The district wanted teachers who were self analytical, able to share decision making, and able to improve instruction.

Organized and designed to promote shared decision making, reflectivity, and self analysis among all of its participants, the Professional Development School helped participants grow as professionals. Teacher responses indicated a unanimous feeling that simply having a student teacher made them feel more professional and required them to examine their instructional practices on a daily basis. Student teacher responses were also positive. A typical comment was "I'm so lucky to have had my training at the PDS. I'm no longer shocked at where these kids come from, what they say, and how they live. Having learned to



teach in the PDS I can teach anywhere now and feel confident" (Stallings, 1991, p. 13).

With the implementation of a Professional Development School program, currently 80% of the student teachers trained in the Houston Professional Development School program are successfully teaching multi-cultural, at risk children who are considered hard-to-teach children (Stallings, 1991). When student teachers were asked if they would choose to teach in an urban setting if they were offered the opportunity, ninety percent indicated that they would welcome the assignment. Morris & Nunnery (1994) found that preservice teachers who had participated in a Professional Development School felt more confident in their ability to help or to teach students who were at risk for school failure. However, not everyone is able to cope with the reality of teaching in urban schools. Further research is needed to examine what characteristics and attributes determine the success of urban teachers.

### *Effects of Professional Development Schools*

Professional Development Schools may be the best hope for addressing beginning teachers' needs and providing a work environment that is conducive to professional growth. Teachers gradually are introduced to the responsibilities of teaching and are given assistance from experienced colleagues (Sclan, 1993). Professional Development Schools provide responsive environments for beginning teachers during and after their internships. With this comprehensive support and follow-up, teachers become better teachers, and in turn, provide a better education for their students.

Benton & Richardson (1993) examined 70 student teachers to determine whether student teachers' attitudes towards their student teaching experiences differed significantly after the addition of Professional Development School experiences. Those who participated in the Professional Development School experience had significant differences on seven items of The Mississippi Student Teacher Attitude Inventory: they enjoyed teaching more; they did not find that student teaching responsibilities restricted their nonprofessional responsibilities; they felt that they were prepared to meet the needs of individual learners; they felt they were respected by students and had confidence in their professional ability; they found that using more than two teaching methods during a class period was not difficult; and they felt that the students had opportunities for enrichment activities daily.

Having student teachers involved in a Professional Development School appeared to benefit student teachers by giving them more realistic expectations about teaching (Benton & Richardson, 1993). Practicum experiences also provided the ground work for learning styles and different teaching styles which helped student teachers have positive attitudes towards meeting individual needs. Teachers had more confidence in themselves, which helped them to gain the respect that was needed from their students.

Morris & Nunnery (1993) studied 140 of the 190 teachers in six schools participating in a Professional Development School program. They found that teachers in Professional Development Schools felt that the Professional Development School experience enhanced their sense of empowerment, and heightened their

sensitivity to the problems and stress experienced by student teachers. They also noted a positive relationship between their perception of the influence they can have in improving teaching and learning, their willingness to share and work with peers to improve teaching and learning, and their confidence as professional role models. Long & Morrow (1995) examined 16 elementary student teachers in a Professional Development School setting and a control group of 16 teachers in a traditional student teaching placement. They found that Professional Development School graduates were prepared better for their first year of teaching than graduates from traditional student teaching programs as measured by interviews and written responses from mentor teachers, administrators, and first year graduates. Professional Development School graduates had more self-confidence, better relations with parents, and did not seem like typical first year teachers (Long & Morrow, 1995).

Teitel (1992,1997) conducted a five year follow up on his research in Professional Developmental Schools and the extent to which they have changed teacher education. Teitel began his study focusing on three colleges involved in Professional Development School partnerships. The research then followed the original three schools five years later. Data was drawn from written materials and interviews with key personnel from the colleges and universities. Teitel expanded the interview pool in his later study to include perspectives of key individuals at some of the schools involved in the Professional Development School partnership.

Teitel found that Professional Development Schools are improving the lives of preservice teachers, students, and

experienced educators. Teitel's Professional Development School research identified improved methods of conducting the preservice field experience. Participant comments included the following: one faculty member stated that "real-world" examples and issues are being woven into the methods courses due to the involvement in the Professional Development Schools. "Everything the student teacher does now is linked with the real life of the classroom" (Teitel 1997, p. 321).

### *Summary*

First year teachers face significant challenges. Several typical problems for beginning teachers have been noted in the literature, but they vary among teachers. Strategies are available to help meet the needs of first year teachers; however, not all new teachers have the same needs. The creation of Professional Development Schools is one approach to preparing teachers for urban schools. Because urban schools have struggled to find qualified teachers, positioning student teachers in urban placements has had positive results. This study examined how three potentially effective urban teachers coped with the challenges of their first year of teaching, how they progressed through the developmental stages of teaching, and how their Professional Development School preparation influenced their experience as first year urban teachers.

### Chapter III

#### Methods and Procedures

##### *Design of the Study*

The purpose of this study is to determine how three potentially effective first year urban teachers change and develop throughout their first year of teaching. It examines the concerns and needs of the these first year urban teachers and their level of preparedness to teach in the urban classroom. This study explores how three first year urban teachers approached their classrooms, how they adjusted during their first year of teaching, and how their teacher preparation program experience contributed to the way they teach. It also examines changes in first year teachers' self efficacy, effective urban teacher characteristics, and their desire to teach in urban settings.

Because there is no developmental model specifically for urban teachers, this study used accepted developmental stages of teaching to determine if the subjects conformed to three existing teacher development models. Three teacher development models were then used to interpret the data and analyze the development of first year urban teachers.

When research requires working with many variables, as proposed in this study, Ragin (1987) has stated that qualitative research is required. Qualitative research has been defined by Creswell (1998) as

. . . an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of

informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.(p.15)

In this study, qualitative methodologies were used to describe the behavior of first year urban teachers and to explore the challenges they faced. This investigation borrowed methodological perspectives from phenomenology, grounded theory, and case study research designs to understand and describe the impact that a teacher preparation program has on the experiences of urban first year teachers.

The developmental models of skill acquisition, reorientation of concerns, and the life cycle approach to teacher development were applied. Themes from each model were linked to examine how they applied to the development of potentially effective urban first year teachers. The researcher explored individual experiences of the subjects' teaching and linked those experiences to the models of teacher development. A survey, interviews, the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990), and the Teacher Career Cycle Inventory (Burke, Christensen, Fessler, McDonnell, Price, 1987) were utilized to gather data from participants about their experiences and how their preparation program influenced their first year of teaching.

### *Setting*

All schools and participants in this study were given pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. Pseudonyms used for the universities were Robertson and Williams. Teacher pseudonyms were David, Kim, and Tina to reflect genders of the teachers involved. The settings for this study began at Robertson University and Williams University in Virginia. The two universities maintain

Professional Development School partnerships for training urban school teachers. Three graduates of the Professional Development School teacher preparation program, in which Robertson and Williams Universities were partners, were selected for this study and followed throughout their first year of teaching in urban settings. The teacher preparation programs from which the subjects were drawn were located in similar urban schools, focused on urban education problems, and provided their student teachers with the same kinds of structure for clinical experiences.

In 1986, Robertson University's School of Education was one of the first schools to participate in the Holmes Partnership to improve the quality of teachers and schools across the nation. The School of Education at the university focuses on innovative programs and research activities to reach this goal. This Professional Development School involves seven local schools that provide preservice teachers the opportunity to take classes and participate in clinical experiences in inner city, suburban and rural placements. This study only utilized the Professional Development Schools that have an urban education focus.

In 1996, the Professional Development School established by Williams University, and initially two elementary public schools, focuses on teamwork. They offer professional education courses that are collaboratively taught, and use best practices. The clinical experiences provided are in urban schools. Professional development opportunities are offered for faculty and administrators of Williams University and for the public schools who participate in the Professional Development School program. Research and evaluation projects are established collaboratively, and parent and community involvement is sought continually.

Some distinctions can be made between the two Professional Development Schools. The Professional Development School at Robertson University's School of Education was one of the first Professional Development Schools established. Their program has been identified as being "at standard" in concurrence with The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The College of Education at Williams University is functioning between the "developing" and "at standard" level. While Robertson University has Professional Development Schools in inner city, suburban, and rural placements, Williams University focuses the Professional Development Schools only in urban settings. While both institutions had similar teacher education programs, one difference noted between the two Professional Development Schools was that Williams University student teachers utilized a Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline (Freiberg, 1999) program whereas there was no consistent discipline focus used in Robertson's Professional Development School settings. Of the first year teacher participants in this study David went through the Robertson Professional Development School preparation program while Kim and Tina went through the Williams Professional Development School program.

David teaches at Smith Elementary School, which opened in 1951 as a kindergarten through sixth grade school. In 1968, in compliance with a desegregation order by the Federal District Court, the school was reorganized. During the years following desegregation, the school experienced declining enrollments that continued until the mid 90's. In 1990, Smith Elementary School began actively to seek neighborhood and community involvement. Currently the school has grown to almost 500 pre-K through fifth



grade students. Smith Elementary was the only school in this study that was part of a Professional Development School partnership. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch in the school system is 70%.

David began his teaching career at forty seven. His main reason for choosing to teach in an urban school system was that he liked the racial, ethnic and economic diversity. He enjoys the diverse background of his students. David, explained: "After the segregation of the 60's I just kind of figured being on the front line in the urban school would make more of a difference than being out in the suburbs."

Kim teaches at Tyler Elementary School. The school has approximately 575 kindergarten through fifth grade students, and the student minority population is 61%. The school system tries to maintain neighborhood schools so that a majority of the students can walk to school. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch is 62%.

Kim started her college training in the field of accounting. She stated that she really did not want to do accounting, but thought she could make some money. "But after two years," she said, " I thought, why am I doing this because this is not what I want to do." She chose teaching because she thought she could make a difference. The main reason she chose to teach in an urban school was that there would be more kids who needed her. ". . . if I could really help those children who weren't getting help from other places, then it would be more meaningful."

Tina teaches at Washington Elementary School, which opened in 1966 and which currently has a student enrollment of approximately 650 kindergarten through fifth grade students. The school serves

students from two military housing areas, so a majority of the students are from that highly transient population. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch is 72%.

Tina is the youngest teacher in this study, who at twenty four, went directly into teaching. She went into teaching so that the kids she taught would know that there was somebody who truly cares for them. She chose to teach in an urban school because she believed people working in urban schools all work towards one goal. Tina is currently teaching in an urban school, but it is not a Professional Development School. She wanted to work in a Professional Development School school setting, but ". . . the timing was not right."

#### *Relationship of Researcher to the Study*

The researcher in this study became concerned about finding, preparing, and retaining qualified teachers in urban school systems about eight years ago. Teaching in an urban school system for the past eleven years, the researcher has seen urban systems struggle to find effective teachers who are willing to teach in urban schools. It is the researcher's belief that the best teachers need to be placed in urban schools. However, it would hinder a school system to place teachers in urban settings without adequately preparing them to meet the challenges. Before beginning this study the researcher reflected back on her first year of teaching and was amazed at how unprepared the researcher felt to enter the classroom and how little was know about the urban school setting. Universities and urban school systems that form partnerships to create Professional Development Schools immediately drew the researcher's interest. The researcher wanted to explore what happens when universities and urban school system

work together to improve the quality of education. The researcher also wanted to explore three teacher's perspectives on the impact of this educational partnership on first year urban teachers.

#### *Population Sample*

This study sought to utilize purposeful sampling in selecting subjects. The first year teachers in this study were selected using the overall scores on The Urban Teacher Selection Interview developed by Haberman (1996). Haberman states that effective urban teachers need to score no lows on the instrument. However, to qualify as a subject for this study, teachers needed to demonstrate seven or more of the ten effective teacher characteristics as measured by Haberman's instrument. Nine first year teachers qualified. One first year teacher was unavailable once she left the university. Two teachers from this sample took non-teaching jobs. Two other teachers were unavailable because of circumstances that kept them from immediately entering the teaching profession. One teacher who had parenting responsibilities declined to participate. The sample size for this study then consisted of the three remaining qualified first year teachers.

That many of the potential subjects for this study did not go directly into teaching after graduation reflects a widespread trend; Chapman and Hutchenson (1982) found that approximately one out of every four students who completes a teacher training program never teaches or leaves teaching within the first five years. Grismer and Kirby (1987) developed a theory about teacher attrition in which life cycle and career stages help explain teacher attrition. They concluded that "the timing of marriage, birth of children, geographical migration, and retirement all play

important roles in explaining teacher attrition (p. xii)." The sample for this study supported Grismer & Kirby's theory.

### *Instrumentation*

Potentially effective urban teachers were identified during their teacher preparation program using the Urban Teacher Selection Interview developed by Haberman. The instrument is a fifty item questionnaire used in the hiring of teachers by many urban schools (Haberman, 1996). The Urban Teacher Selection Interview is an "evaluation of how close an individual's responses are to those of star urban teachers" (Haberman, written communication). Haberman has conducted over a thousand interviews to investigate how "star teachers" think and behave differently from those teachers who fail. This instrument, derived from a research and theory base, measures attributes and skills of teachers who are successful in teaching children in urban schools versus those who are not (Haberman, 1995).

Haberman identifies fifteen characteristics of successful urban teachers: showing persistence, protecting childrens' learning, putting ideas into practice, developing an approach to at-risk students, demonstrating a professional-personal orientation to students, working with the bureaucracy, acknowledging fallibility, showing emotional and physical stamina, displaying organizational ability, explaining teacher success, explaining childrens' success, doing real teaching, making students feel needed, distinguishing between the material vs the student, and demonstrating gentle teaching in a violent society.

Reliability of an instrument is concerned with the consistency of scores (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996). The Urban

Teacher Selection Interview developed by Haberman has a test-retest reliability of .93. "Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure" (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996, p. 262). The Urban Teacher Selection Interview has been tested periodically to validate the level of discrimination, with no changes being reported. The criterion-related validity was reported by Haberman as 95% for the candidates who passed the written interview (McKinney, unpublished paper, 2000). The Urban Teacher Selection Interview was intended to identify factors that distinguish between teachers who were unsuccessful as urban teachers and those who were successful. Haberman defines successful urban teachers as those whose students place well on standardized tests, who are highly regarded as professionals by parents, students, principals, colleagues, and central office supervisors. Successful urban teachers are also regarded as effective by cooperating universities and have positive views of themselves as successful teachers.

A survey of teachers, developed by the researcher for this study, was utilized to measure preparation and readiness to teach, and desire to teach in an urban setting. The survey was modeled from a previous study and was field tested on teachers to ensure the validity of the items asked were relevant to first year teachers. The survey was administered twice, once in September and once in May. Responses were analyzed to determine how the potentially effective urban teachers selected to participate in this study compared to responses given by other teachers to a similar survey conducted by the National Center for Education Information (1990). Changes in subjects' opinions also were assessed.

The Profile of Teachers in the survey by the National Center for Education Information, employed a systematic random sampling of 2,640 kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers throughout the fifty states. The purpose of the survey was to "ascertain the answers to many questions about who teachers are, how they are prepared to teach, their attitudes about student learning and numerous education reform proposals, where they teach and are willing to teach, why they originally went into teaching, and why they are currently teaching, their levels of satisfaction, and what they expect to be doing five years from now" (Feistritzer, Quelle & Chester, 1990, p. 3).

To address the self-efficacy of teachers in the present study, a revised version of the Teacher Efficacy Scale by Woolfolk & Hoy (1990) was utilized. The instrument was administered three times, at the beginning, middle and end of the year. Woolfolk and Hoy found evidence to support two dimensions of teacher efficacy, general teaching efficacy and personal teaching efficacy. General teaching efficacy reflects a general belief in the power of teaching to reach difficult children. General teaching efficacy has more in common with teacher attitudes toward education. Personal efficacy is the belief that one can affect change in students. Personal teaching efficacy appears to be a more accurate indicator of a teacher's personal sense of efficacy (1993). Teachers' change scores in efficacy were examined to determine the pattern of self-efficacy in both teaching and personal efficacy.

A factor analysis of the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) produced two independent dimensions of general and personal teaching efficacy. Each item is measured by a six point Likert scale which moves from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The test contains twenty items and differentiates between personal efficacy and teaching efficacy. Cronbach's alpha was .74 for the teaching efficacy scale and .82 for the personal efficacy scale.

To address teacher developmental stages and what influences the progression of developmental stages in first year teachers, methodological triangulation was utilized. Triangulation increases the validity of evaluation and research findings (Mathison, 1988). In this study, triangulation was used to help the researcher ". . . study and understand when and why there are differences" (Patton, 1980, p. 331). Methodological triangulation incorporates multiple methods in the examination of a social phenomenon to increase the confidence in the research findings (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). The three methods utilized were the Teacher Career Cycle Inventory, teacher interviews, and principal interviews.

The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory is a 35-item instrument that was developed by Burke, Fessler, and Christensen to identify stages of teacher growth (Burke, Christensen, Fessler, McDonnell, Price, 1987), and to assess differences among teacher career stages. Information gained from this assessment instrument was combined with the ethnographic interviews to examine movement and differences in the developmental stages of teaching. The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory is an instrument in which teachers identified what best described their attitude or situation. This instrument was developed by practicing teachers to describe how they felt at different career stages. These statements were then coded according to career stages, field tested, and submitted to an item screening process. This process yielded thirty five items in which teachers described themselves and their careers. Burke, Christensen, Fessler, McDonnell, & Price (1987) indicated that 78%

of the variance was attributed to the differences among the career groups. The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory was administered for this study in September and May.

The ethnographic interview was used to identify and describe issues that cannot be observed directly (Merriam, 1988). The interview was a way to "find out what was in and on someone's mind" (Patton, 1980, p. 107), allowing the researcher a view of the other person's perspective. Spradley (1979) stated that the three most important elements of an ethnographic interview are an explicit purpose, explanations, and questions. When the researcher and the subjects met, the researcher explained the purpose of the interview and the questions to be asked. Each subject received the same briefing from the researcher and was asked the same initial questions. This structure helped to control the direction of the interview.

Monthly ethnographic interviews were conducted with each subject. A list of primary questions were asked of all members, with follow-up questions for clarification. The interviews were coded to help describe the developmental stages of first year teachers. Initially these codes were literature-based, but new codes emerged as the study progressed and the interview questions changed.

Interview questions took three forms: descriptive, structural, and contrast. "Descriptive questions form the basis of all ethnographic interviewing" (Spradley, 1979, p. 90). They provide opportunities for informants to expand and elaborate on their answers. Structural questions provide opportunities for explanations. Contrast questions provide opportunities to explain the meaning behind symbols. The interviews were semi-structured.



The same questions were asked of all participants with deviations being documented. The first series of ethnographic interviews, scheduled early in the school year, began with the following questions:

1. What do you find yourself focusing on as you get ready for your first year of teaching?
2. What do you think will help you during your first few weeks of teaching?
3. What do you feel most prepared and least prepared to do?

The second series of interviews was scheduled approximately every four weeks, and the following questions were asked:

1. What do you find yourself focusing on in your teaching?
2. Describe how your focus has changed.
3. Have your expectations changed? If so, in what ways?
4. Do you have any concerns at this time?
5. What has helped you deal with your concerns?
6. What do you feel most prepared and least prepared to do?
7. What else might be important to let preservice teachers know about that was not covered at the university?
8. Describe how you have adjusted and developed as a teacher.

If teachers had trouble communicating their feelings, or if issues were not coming out in the interview, then, the following probing questions were asked.

1. How are you dealing with classroom discipline?
2. How are you dealing with parents?
3. Why are you teaching in an urban setting?
4. What experiences or knowledge have you used from your Professional Development School experience?

5. Are you participating in any workshops or inservices to help you in your instruction?
6. What are your goals related to teaching?
7. How has the school system in which you are employed helped you in your first year of teaching?
8. Who has helped you? Give examples.

Principals also were interviewed in October and May to provide insight on how potentially effective urban teachers who had been identified for this study compared to other first year teachers. The interview questions were:

1. How do these teachers compare to other first year teachers you have worked with in the past?
2. How have they adjusted to an urban setting?
3. What makes the adjustment possible?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the studied first year teachers?
5. What would help other future teachers adjust and develop to become effective urban teachers?

#### *Data Collection*

In this study there were multiple phases in collecting data that were cyclical in nature. Creswell (1998) stated that an important step in this process is to gain access and establish rapport with the participants in the study so that they will provide good data. Typically this is addressed by finding multiple people who have experienced the issue being examined. Qualified subjects were identified prior to their first year of teaching. Contact was then made to secure their participation in the study. Monthly ethnographic interviews then took place throughout their first year of teaching. Data was collected from the monthly

ethnographic interviews. The interviews were prearranged and held in the subjects' classrooms or in their homes. Each interview, which lasted 30-60 minutes, was audiotaped and transcribed. Transcribed interviews then were coded and analyzed for themes. Data analysis began in August and continued throughout the study.

First year teachers completed The Teacher Efficacy Scale (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) in September, January, and May. Additionally, first year teachers completed a teacher survey developed by the researcher. All interviews and survey data were collected by the researcher with the knowledge, permission, and cooperation of the first year teachers and the principals of the three urban elementary schools.

Interview data was collected monthly to identify teacher developmental stages and to examine their progress over time. Self-efficacy and Teacher Career Cycle data were collected in September, January and May. Data from a survey of teachers, developed for this study, were collected in September and May. All data were reproduced, cataloged, and stored in a secure place.

#### *Data Analysis*

The essential standards of quality and verification identified by Creswell (1998) were utilized throughout this study. A prolonged engagement took place with the participants by monthly ethnographic interviews. This facilitated the development of trust between the teachers and the researcher so that the researcher learned the culture of the first year teachers. Interview transcript analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's (1994) analytic practices and Creswell's (1998) data analysis spiral. The data analysis spiral begins with reading and memoing during initial data collection. Codes were created to describe,

classify, and interpret data. The analysis involves sorting through the data to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, and common sequences. Slowly, a small set of generalizations emerges. The final stage in the data analysis spiral, representing and visualizing, displays the research results as narrative text and also may include diagrams, tables, figures, or matrices.

The monthly ethnographic interviews were analyzed for themes or codes to be organized into categories. The categories used were First Year Teacher Concerns (Veenman, 1984), Teacher Development (Fuller, 1969; Burke, Fessler & Christensen, 1984; Berliner, 1988) and Coping Strategies (Covert, 1986; Thompson & Schuck, 1987; McGuire, Klass, & Piercy, 1991; Chester, 1992). Although these beginning categories were based on the review of the literature, other categories emerged such as discipline, teacher evaluations, and commitment to urban teaching.

First year teacher concerns were coded into the categories of student learning styles, classroom management, working effectively within the school organization, relationships with parents, motivating students, assessing students' work, organization of class work, insufficient and/or inadequate teaching materials, and culture shock. Another concern, special education issues, was added as data were collected. During the monthly ethnographic interviews, the teachers' coping strategies were analyzed to determine if peers, preservice teaching experiences, mentor teachers, administrators, inservice training, and family helped teachers cope with the challenges of their first year.

Teacher development was coded using the characteristics described in the stages of the three models of teacher development

being used in the analysis. Categories employed from the three teacher development models were as follows: the skill acquisition model: novice teacher, advanced beginner, and competent teacher; the reorientation of concerns model: preteaching, early teaching, and late teaching; and the life cycle model of teacher development: preservice, induction, competency building, and career frustration. Of these three models, only the first two stages of each were examined. The later stages would not typically be found in first year teachers. Effective urban teacher characteristics were coded by the characteristics of the developmental stages of teaching.

Interviews of principals were utilized to provide a supervisor's perspective on how the three teachers selected for this study compared to other first year teachers. Member checks were completed quarterly so that the researcher could assess the participants' views and confirm the credibility of the findings and interpretations.

Data from the Teacher Efficacy Scale was analyzed to determine how first year teachers responded to the questions on general teaching efficacy and personal efficacy. This test was given at regular intervals so test scores could be examined over time. The teaching and personal efficacy scores were not combined to get a total score since the scores represent independent factors.

### *Summary*

This chapter describes the methodologies and procedures used to examine how teachers who have the characteristics of potentially effective urban teachers make the transition to teaching in urban schools. The Urban Teacher Selection Interview

was utilized to identify potentially effective urban teachers. A Teacher Efficacy Scale, a survey of teachers, and The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory were used to identify first year teacher qualities and attitudes. Ethnographic interviews of teachers and principals were conducted, coded, analyzed, and used with teacher development models to identify themes and patterns. Finally, member checks with the participants were implemented to insure accuracy.

## Chapter IV

### Analysis and Results

#### *Introduction*

The purpose of this study was to determine how three potentially effective first year urban teachers change and develop throughout their first year of teaching. It examined the concerns and needs of these first year urban teachers, and their level of preparedness to teach in the urban classroom. This study explored how first year urban teachers approached their classrooms, how they adjusted during their first year of teaching, and how their teacher preparation program experience influenced the way they teach. It also examined changes in first year teachers' self efficacy, effective urban teacher characteristics, and their desire to teach in urban settings.

The related questions explored in this study were as follows:

1. What are the concerns of three first year teachers who teach in urban schools as measured by monthly ethnographic interviews?
2. What resources do three urban teachers utilize to meet the challenges of teaching during their first year as measured by monthly ethnographic interviews and principal interviews?
3. How do these potentially effective teachers in urban settings adjust to their first year of teaching as measured by monthly ethnographic interviews and principal interviews?
4. How do three first year teachers perceive the usefulness of their Professional Development School preparation program for preparing them to teach in their current classroom settings as indicated by a teacher survey and monthly ethnographic interviews?

5. In what aspects do these urban teachers change during their first year of teaching as measured by the Teacher Efficacy Scale, teacher survey, and The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory?

6. What characteristics do three potentially effective first year urban teachers exhibit while they develop professionally as indicated by monthly ethnographic interviews and principal interviews, the Teacher Efficacy Scale, and The Teacher Career Cycle Inventory?

7. How motivated are three first year teachers to continue to teach in an urban setting as measured by the monthly ethnographic interviews and teacher survey?

The several kinds of data collected for this study were analyzed to identify the needs of first year urban teachers as they began their teaching careers, as they coped during the year, and as they evaluated the role of their experience in helping them adapt to the urban setting. Issues identified include special education concerns, teacher preparedness, discipline, and teacher observations and evaluations. Subject responses regarding their Professional Development School teacher preparation program were analyzed to determine that program's impact on teacher adjustment to the urban setting. Responses to questions about first year urban teacher challenges, coping strategies, and their classroom focus were identified and analyzed. The teachers' professional development was monitored continually to identify their personal characteristics. Their changes and adjustments were analyzed using three different teacher development models.

#### *Concerns Perceived by Three First Year Teachers*

At the beginning of the school year, September to November, the participants were concerned about special education issues,



teacher observations, paperwork and bureaucracy issues, grades, curriculum demands, parents, and testing. Special education issues were the only common concern among the three teachers. Two teachers shared concerns about curriculum and teacher observations. All other concerns were unique to the individual first year teacher. From December to February the first year teachers had fewer concerns than in the September to November period. There was no common concern for all three teachers. In the period, March to May, two common concerns surfaced. Two teachers were concerned with giving the end of the year tests, and making sure that their students had enough content knowledge to be promoted. Writing was also a concern for two teachers who felt that they had not spent enough time teaching and developing their student writing skills. A chronologically sequenced discussion of each teacher's concerns follows.

In September, Tina was concerned about a student who had transferred from another school into her inclusion classroom (see Table 4). The student was having a difficult time making the transition from a self contained setting to an inclusion classroom. Tina also was concerned about her first teacher observation in October. She was constantly on edge and anxious and felt she would feel that way until her principal was ". . . out the door." Tina was also becoming concerned about the amount of paperwork required of teachers. She felt much of the paperwork was not being used, and therefore she was wasting time that could be spent better helping students.

In January, Tina expressed concerns about how her time was being spent in and outside the classroom. She was happy to help those students who did not understand concepts, but who were

showing some effort. However, she was unwilling to stay after school to give the student who was reading a book during a math lesson the extra five or ten minutes to reteach that lesson. "I have stopped making the extra effort to go above and beyond for them. . . . When I see some effort from them, I will be more than happy to jump back into the way things were. No questions asked . . . . I can't decide if that is a bad way to be or just a more realistic way."

In March, Tina also shared concerns about her students mastering division. She had been working on the concept for a month, and many students still struggled with it. She had taught division in a variety of ways and had not rushed the unit. But she found that the students were not transferring the skills. Furthermore, several students were not studying and completing their homework to review the steps in division. Tina was also concerned that several of her students had not progressed in their writing. "Some kids have completely turned it around and are doing so much better with expanding their ideas. But some of them are probably just as poor at writing as they were when they got here." Tina did not understand how she could help those students to improve their writing, nor did she understand why some of her students did not progress. Writing was an area in Tina's instructional program that she had concerns with for the rest of the year.

Table 4

Teacher Concerns of Tina

Time Period	Teacher Concern	Discussion
September-		
November	special education	Tina had a student transfer into her classroom from another school where the student was in a self contained classroom. The student was having difficulty with the curriculum now that she was placed in an inclusion setting.
	teacher observation	First teacher observation was to be in the next week.
	bureaucracy	Tina was frustrated with all of the paperwork associated with teaching: reading and writing folders, completing growth charts, and regulating lesson plans. This bureaucracy takes time away for reflecting on how to teach kids better.

(table continues)

December-

February

bureaucracy

Tina was concerned that teaching is not about children, but about paperwork.

student's effort

Tina was concerned about students putting in some effort to learn concepts.

March-May

division

Several students, after a month of instruction, were still weak in their understanding of division concepts.

student writing

Some of Tina's students had not shown much development in their writing.

David's concerns at the beginning of the year focused on how to gather student grades (see Table 5). When he gave his first test there were many children getting 100 percent, while others scored in the high 50's. This disparity came as a shock to David. He wondered if he had made the test too hard or too easy. He also wondered if he should be giving the same test to all students. David also was concerned with a special education student who had been mainstreamed into his classroom. The student was struggling with several academic subjects and gradually falling behind. Concerned about how to teach writing, David also was apprehensive about how he was teaching communication skills. He was trying to integrate a novel study into his district's literature series.

In December, a new concern appeared for David. He became concerned about his teaching position. Over the Christmas holidays he was losing three students and not gaining others which dropped his class size to fifteen students. Worried about not having a teaching position after the holidays, David had been assured by others not to worry. This apprehension continued into January when he was formally observed for the first time. He felt that the school administration was trying to decide who would be offered a teaching contract for the next year. He felt ". . . a little nervous about that."

In February, David felt more confident about himself as a teacher and the progress of his students. He did not have any specific concerns. His students were beginning to make connections across curriculum areas and were ". . . becoming more and more familiar with [the curriculum]." In March, David felt that his students were going through a slump. There had been several breaks with Fridays off, (work days, parent conferences, and professional days) to interrupt the instructional week. Expressing himself, David said, "I am always trying to play catch up. It interrupts the week."

Towards the end of the year, David was concerned about how his students would perform on their end-of-the-year tests. He was also concerned about what he would do differently next year. Feeling that he had not systematically pursued writing with his students, David read a book about teaching writing and holding writing conferences. He realized he had not been using many of the ideas in his own classroom. "I have been talking to the kids casually and walking around the classroom instead of meeting with them and going over a writing portfolio."

Table 5

Teacher Concerns of David

Time Period	Teacher Concern	Discussion
September-		
November	grades	David was concerned about how to assess students and to give grades.
	special education	David was concerned about a student who had been mainstreamed and was falling behind.
	teaching content	David was concerned about gaining mastery in teaching communication skills especially in reading and writing.
December-		
February	teaching position	David was losing three students so he was concerned that his teaching position would be eliminated.

(table continues)

	evaluation/observation	David felt that the administration in the school was at the point in the year when they were deciding on what teachers would be continuing their teaching contract. David was concerned about his evaluation.
March-May	interruptions	There had been many interruptions in the instructional week and David felt that he was always trying to make up for lost time.
	testing	David was concerned about how well his students would do on the end of the year tests.
	writing	David realized that he did not spend as much time on writing as he should have during the school year.

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Kim's concerns at the beginning of the year centered on the curriculum and testing (see Table 6). She was feeling pressure in a half day kindergarten to fit all of the curriculum requirements

into the classroom. When special topics were added to the curriculum, Kim spoke to the principal about the possibility of having an all day kindergarten program at the school. She was beginning to take a more active role when she had concerns about her classroom. Required state and district tests were consuming a lot of instructional time. Kim began to seek other ways to help lengthen teaching time. She sought more parental involvement both in and outside of the classroom so parents could reinforce learning. Kim also expressed concern about one of her special needs student. The student was not able to take care of his personal hygiene needs and was not potty trained.

Toward the end of the year Kim was concerned about the lack of progress by several by her students. Some kindergartners had not learned all the letters in the alphabet. The students who did not know the alphabet were unable to identify twenty letters. Kim said, "It's not just like five letters where I could say oh well they will get it. It is difficult for me because I find that I get frustrated because I run out of ideas to teach letter identification. I have tried these things and nothing is helping. The alphabet is something you have to learn. You have to work with it and you have to memorize it." She felt hopeless. Kim was concerned that she was doing something wrong since some of her students had not grasped the concept. She was struggling to find other ways to help her students learn basic kindergarten skills.

By the end of April, Kim stated that she really didn't have any concerns. In fact, she exclaimed, "I feel like I know where we are going." She knew which students were able to go to first grade and which needed to be retained. Kim had already had conferences with the parents of the students who were going to be retained,



and felt good about those conferences. Kim had two kindergarten classes, a morning and an afternoon, and of her forty-three students, she was considering retention for five. After the conferences, some parents began to review material with their children and, two of the students slated to be retained became candidates for promotion.

Table 6

Teacher Concerns of Kim

Time Period	Teacher Concern	Discussion
September- November	curriculum issues	Kim was concerned with scheduling all the curriculum requirements in a half day kindergarten program.
	special education	Kim was concerned with a student who came to kindergarten with special needs but was not identified to receive special education services.

(table continues)

	parents	Kim was concerned about increasing parent involvement so parents could help reinforce learning at home.
	testing	Kim was concerned with assessing students on district tests and portfolio testing. This process was taking up instructional time.
December-February	parents	Parents are Kim's biggest concern because, as she puts it, ". . . You never know what they are going to say or what their reactions will be."
	curriculum issues	Kim had concerns about covering all concepts in a half day kindergarten setting.
March-May	knowing basic skills	Kim was concerned that several students did not know the alphabet and yet they had been working on the concept the entire year.

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The concerns of first year teachers reflected in the literature were classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, assessing student work, developing relationships with parents, being organized, coping with inadequate and/or insufficient teaching materials and supplies, and dealing with problems of individual students (Veenman, 1984). Burden (1980) found first year teachers concerned with maintaining classroom control, teaching the subject, improving their teaching skills which included lesson planning, organizing units and materials, grading, knowing the curriculum, and deciding what to teach.

The concerns of the three first year teachers in this study were reflected during the monthly ethnographic interviews. The three first year teachers in this study did not have concerns with enforcing discipline, maintaining classroom control, dealing with individual differences, and dealing with insufficient teaching materials or supplies. They did, however, reflect several concerns stated in the literature such as, working with parents, and teaching the subject. All of the first year teachers in this study had special education concerns.

Concerns of first year teachers were explored because the literature shows that the transition from teacher training to the first teaching position can be traumatic and often is referred to as "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984). However, the three teachers in this study did not experience a reality shock when they entered the classroom. The three teachers had concerns, but they were able to cope with the problems and settle into their first year of teaching.

*Special Education Concerns*

Dealing with special education issues and the special education process were major concerns for the three teachers in this study. The three teachers were unsure how to work with learning disabled students, developmentally delayed students, visually impaired students, and emotionally disturbed children in classroom settings. The three first year teachers' concerns in this study differed from the concerns found in the related literature. As a result of this difference, further examination of special education was conducted during the year to see if the issue was being addressed, and to examine if and how it was being resolved. At the beginning of this study, special education was a major concern for all teachers; however, by the end of the year, most of the related issues had been resolved. The first year teachers resolved their issues by developing closer working relationships with special education teachers, parents, other school personnel, and the students. The first year teachers were unfamiliar with the special needs of students and sought information to help them better understand their handicapping conditions.

Tina continued to struggle with the inclusion model that integrates special education students into the classroom. She preferred a pull-out model, which she felt was less disruptive to the class, where the special education students take the necessary instruction outside of the regular classroom. Concerned that, at times, the regular students were taking time away from the special education students, Tina found that when the special education teacher was in the room, other students would try to monopolize her. Tina said, "I understand the idea behind it and I think it is

a great idea, but it does not work."

Unlike Tina, David felt better about his special education students. His main concern was a student who was trying to be mainstreamed into the regular classroom. He resolved this issue by working closely with the special education teacher, parent, and principal to expand and include more accommodations. David had another student who was blind. At the beginning of the year, David tried to adapt all of his lessons to meet the blind student's needs. Finding this approach difficult to maintain David finally concluded, "I can't prepare everything for him. That is what his special education teacher is supposed to do."

Kim's special education concerns focused on the child study team in her building. A school psychologist had trained the faculty at her school to identify and refer possible special education students. She observed that, "They were pretty quick about it, but at the time, it did not seem like it because it was frustrating to me." The team informed Kim what she needed to bring to the committee and how to assess and document her student's strengths and weaknesses. Kim found the process helpful. She exclaimed, ". . . once you sit through one or two you see how the team assesses the student." She has since gained a better understanding of the special education process by working with another teacher. A pre-kindergarten special education class is located across the hall from Kim's classroom, and a regular education teacher is required to sign off on all individual education plans for students. Kim sat in on several assessment meetings, and found them ". . . pretty helpful to get used to the process."

### *Coping Techniques*

The skills and resources urban teachers utilized to meet the challenges of teaching were important issues for this study. All teachers in this study expected their coworkers to help them during their first year. However, as the year went on, their perceptions began to change. When problems occurred Tina found herself pulling away from coworkers and relying more on herself. David quickly found out that other teachers were very busy trying to get everything done, and began solving problems on his own. Unlike Tina and David, Kim drew closer to the other kindergarten teachers. They met weekly as a group to discuss what they were doing the next week and to share materials. She would ask them how they would handle certain situations, especially, working with parents. This information provided ideas for developing her own strategies.

The teachers in this study also identified personal characteristics that helped them meet the challenges of their first year of teaching (see Table 7). Tina stated that "patience has really helped me . . . . sometimes I just need to step back from it for a little bit." At the beginning of the year all of the first year teachers relied heavily on their organizational skills and spent a lot of time organizing their classrooms. However, as the year progressed, the teachers utilized this characteristic more efficiently. Because they had discovered a system that worked for them and their students, they spent less time getting organized. For example, at the beginning of the year, Kim was spending five hours every night planning her lessons for the following day. However, by the end of the year, Kim had developed an organizational system that she was able to anticipate where the

curriculum was going so she was able to begin planning for the week instead of a day at a time. All of the teachers utilized the personal characteristics of flexibility and persistence. These first year teachers adapted to new and unfamiliar situations and found the best method to cope with new challenges.

Although all teachers had been to workshops and inservices to help them during their first year, they still sought out other resources for their classrooms. They searched the internet for lesson plan ideas and for more information about topics. Each teacher in this study credited their Professional Development School training with providing a model for how teachers can work together to enhance student learning. David believed that, because he was part of the Professional Development School preparation program, he was more willing to seek help from colleagues. Tina shared David's assessment of the Professional Development School environment, and wished that more teachers in her building were willing to work together. Kim developed a professional network of teachers that supported her throughout her first year of teaching. All three teachers hoped to strengthen the professional collaboration among their grade groups during the next year.

Table 7

Coping Techniques

	District Resources	Outside Resources	Characteristics
Tina	coworkers	internet	organization
	teacher specialists	professional books	flexibility
	workshops		patience
	curriculum guide		
David	principal	college professors	organization
	teacher specialist	professional books	flexibility
	coworkers	internet	
	mentor	teacher friends	
	observing coworkers		
	workshops		
	feedback from students		
Kim	feedback from parents		
	coworkers	teacher friends	flexibility
	workshops	workshops	organization
	curriculum guide		stamina
	visiting other schools		

Member checks were conducted for coping techniques first year teachers used to help them with classroom challenges in the classroom. All teachers added additional coping techniques. David stated that feedback from students and parents had significantly helped him. He had held parent-teacher conferences and the parents were pleased at the student progress made during the year. The responses of both parents and students served to validate his



teaching.

Tina added several techniques that had helped her cope. She stated that her school's curriculum road map had helped her use the same objectives as the other fourth grade teachers, without dictating the methods. Tina used professional books and resources to find learning activities. Beginning in January, Tina designated a night off per week for taking no work home. This technique helped her pace herself and create some much needed personal time.

Kim stated that she utilized the district's curriculum guide to keep her focused. She also participated in several workshops that helped her with new ideas, strategies and classroom techniques. Kim found after an illness that she needed more energy. She asserted a direct connection between energy and student interest: "The kids reflect that if I am excited about something, and it is fun to me, then they think it is fun." Kim also discussed how a recent trip to observe another urban school's program helped her teaching. The trip increased her enthusiasm for teaching. She was so impressed with how they used books in an integrated approach, that she returned to discuss her observations with the kindergarten teachers.

#### *Teacher Preparedness*

The three first year teachers selected for this study completed a Professional Development School preparation program. As with any preparation program the main goal is to prepare teachers to teach effectively. The two Professional Development School programs in this study wanted to prepare teachers to teach effectively in urban schools. This study followed three urban teachers into their first year of teaching to observe if they felt prepared to teach in an urban setting. During monthly ethnographic

interviews the three teachers were asked what they felt most prepared to do in the classroom and what they felt least prepared to handle. Insights can be helpful in understanding the struggles and successes of these three teachers.

At the beginning of the year, the first year teachers in this study felt most prepared for handling discipline issues, working with other teachers, and writing lesson plans. As the year progressed, however, individual differences were noted. In August Tina began by feeling most prepared for dealing with discipline issues (see Table 8). She observed: "That was the one thing, in the Professional Developmental Schools, is that there is such a structure and regimentation in terms of discipline." In September she felt most prepared about not worrying about everything and letting the little things get to her. She stated, "It either works or it doesn't work. And I just figure if it doesn't work, then I will just find another way the next day." However this optimistic attitude did not last. For the next two months, she did not feel that she was prepared to do anything. Being observed for the first time shook Tina's self confidence.

By December, Tina felt that she was most prepared for helping her students learn. She said, "I can find a way to teach. . . every one of them and. . . turn that light bulb on." During the middle of the year Tina felt comfortable with her teaching. She felt that she taught social studies the best. By the end of February, Tina had become more confident that she could meet the challenges of her urban classroom. "I generally feel more prepared each day and each week."

In March, Tina did not feel most prepared in any particular area. "I'm kind of in my routine. I go with the flow because

everything in the classroom is going well." She felt generally prepared in the classroom, but not highly confident in one area. By April Tina felt that she was most prepared to teach math, science, and social studies. Tina stated that those subjects seemed more tangible to her students. She felt, however, that "there is so much stylization in communication skills especially in writing. Everyone had their own opinion and their own way of doing things and trying to get them all to head in one direction while not trying to stifle their creativity is difficult."

Table 8

Tina Most Prepared

Time Period	Most Prepared
August-November	discipline flexibility
December-February	teaching skills teaching subjects facing challenges
March-May	teaching subjects preparing students

For several months Tina felt least prepared when she was observed and evaluated by the principal (see Table 9). Tina was observed formally twice, but the principal frequently stopped in the classroom unannounced. Furthermore, she was struggling to keep up with the administrative duties of teaching. Not having received any feedback on her teaching she was concerned that the principal

did not like what she was doing in the classroom. She became unsure of herself and her abilities as a teacher. She commented: ". . . they might not like what I do, but it might work for the kids. You know there are all sorts of ways, not everybody is going to do things in the same manner. . . ." She found herself being "obsessed with organization": Tina was staying until eight o'clock every night to organize herself. She said, "I'm trying to get better so it's not self-defeating." She was also struggling with record keeping and reporting requirements. Tina felt that these requirements took time away from teaching.

By December, Tina felt that she needed the most help teaching communication skills. Tina was unsure how the communications block was to be structured. She felt that the two-and-a-half hours set aside for communication skills was difficult to manage. Tina also felt unprepared for issues related to grading and was struggling to keep up with all of the work generated by her students. Still she wanted to provide students with meaningful feedback.

In March, Tina felt least prepared for the task of motivating her students. The students were not studying, and this was reflected in many of their grades. She did not feel unprepared to teach study skills, but studying was something that they had to do on their own. "They have to study. It is not going to miraculously happen, but they think it is."

Tina did not feel least prepared in any subject, but she did feel that writing was the most difficult to teach. Many of the students do not see anything wrong with their writing; therefore, it is difficult for students to edit their own work. When Tina has her students peer edit, the errors are still there. ". . . Essentially they are writing the way they speak." Despite this

struggle, Tina felt confident that next year her students would enter fifth grade well prepared. "I think I have gotten them ahead of the game on a lot of things. I think that they won't have as much difficulty getting up to speed next year."

Table 9

Tina Least Prepared

Time Period	Least Prepared
August-November	teacher evaluation organization
December-February	knowing curriculum grading
March-May	student motivation knowing curriculum

David began the year feeling most prepared to work with the other teachers in the building (see Table 10). He also felt prepared to relate to the students in his classroom. David believed that the students may forget what the teacher teaches them, but they will never forget how the teacher makes them feel. "If I get angry with them, I really try not to put them down." In October David felt most prepared in adapting lessons to fit his students' needs. His relationships with the students were strong.

In December, David felt most prepared to deal with the science curriculum, commenting "I try to sweep the kids along especially when we are doing something relevant like electricity and magnetism and kind of tell them about the world and why this

is important." This technique was a strength David drew upon for several months. His confidence with the science curriculum began to spread to other areas. In February David felt better prepared to teach communication skills, an important breakthrough since, for several months, teaching communication skills was an area in which David felt least prepared.

Toward the end of the year David felt most prepared to reinforce the standards of learning, especially in the areas of social studies and science. He felt that the students would do well on their final tests. David also found that his students had good background knowledge of ecosystems and relationships, therefore he could build on the student's understanding.

Table 10

David Most Prepared

Time Period	Most Prepared
August-November	working with coworkers relating to students adapting lessons
December-February	teaching science teaching reading
March-May	reinforcing standards teaching science

At the beginning of the year David felt least prepared when dealing with the parents (see Table 11). He was apprehensive about the questions parents would pose. "I'm scared of a parent asking

me a question about something and not being able to give an answer." Another area where David felt unprepared was assessing specific student skills. He observed: "I'm not keeping portfolios of work as carefully as I should." He felt his weakest teaching area was communication skills. David noted that his students were bored with the basal reading series, and was considering introducing novel studies into the curriculum.

In December, David felt least prepared to help students retain content. He found it alarming when students could not recall concepts that he had recently taught. "I think that is all teacher's frustration," he commented. David also struggled with how best to teach writing. "Although I consider myself a good writer, I just am aware that I really don't know how to teach it". He felt least prepared to teach writing. ". . . I am realizing that lots of kids are resistant to writing. . . . I guess I am feeling that I am really not prepared to teach writing. I really have to go back and regroup. We have to start with something simpler. . . . even if their writing is not going well we are going to work on it and practice it. It is going to be all right." In February David struggled with how grades should be distributed. He analyzed his tests to see if they were too easy or too hard. He questioned whether his students should all receive A's, B's and C's or if the grading distribution should look more like the bell curve. David was unsure if he was doing the "right thing". He gave tests and analyzed the results. Finding that the majority of the students all missed the same question, he decided to reteach the concept and retest the skill.

Toward the end of the year David continued to feel least prepared to teach writing. He discovered that the students had

difficulty editing each others' work: "How do you get them [students] to edit each others' work when they don't see the errors?" David felt the best strategy was to introduce more student writing. With more intensive experiences in reading and writing, David believed the students would become more familiar and comfortable with the rules of the English language.

Table 11

David Least Prepared

Time Period	Least Prepared
August-November	dealing with parents literature series assessment teaching writing
December-February	student retention teaching writing grading
March-May	teaching writing teaching language arts

Kim began her first year of teaching feeling most prepared to write lesson plans (see Table 12). In October, she felt most prepared to assess and to test her students because these were the areas she had spent the most time teaching. She observed: "I have that assessment thing down." Once testing was completed, Kim began to feel most prepared with what she needed to teach her students and with the curriculum needs in Kindergarten. Kim's own words



expressed her feeling of success: "I feel prepared for what needs to be taught and now if I can keep on this path of having everything organized for the next week with all the materials it will all go well."

Kim continued to feel most prepared when working with the curriculum. To her, "the curriculum is predictable." According to Kim, "You know what is coming next week and you know where you are supposed to be even if you are not there yet." She felt successful knowing that, in her classroom, the students knew what was expected of them. And as they were able to monitor their own behavior, Kim was able to do most of her instruction in small group settings. The students were working well in groups even if they were not being directly monitored. In this setting, she also felt good about keeping up with all the student portfolios and assessments.

In March, Kim felt much better about running groups and doing guided reading. Kim felt prepared in her teaching skills and her ability to work with students. She explained it this way: "Right now our groups are going well and the classroom organization is working really well." Kim did not feel least prepared in any area, but was not looking forward to the end of the year assessments. Kim, though trying to be flexible, felt that assessments disrupted the schedule and threw the classroom off track.

During her May interview, Kim reflected on the year and felt that she had been most prepared when working with her students. She explained: "They have always been my first priority from the very first minute they walked in the door." Kim felt that she had maintained structure in which the students knew what to expect and what she expected of them. Commenting on the importance of

classroom structure, Kim observed: "If you don't have structure and behavior expectations then I don't feel like the students will learn anything because you will spend so much time backtracking to get them back on track."

Table 12

Kim Most Prepared

Time Period	Most Prepared
August-November	lesson plans assessment knowing the curriculum
December-February	knowing the curriculum small group instruction assessment/portfolios
March-May	teaching skills classroom organization teaching skills

Kim's areas of weakness were personal organization and the inability to fit all the curriculum needs into the school day (see Table 13). Kim struggled to organize the school day so that she would be able to have time to teach all the required subjects. Although she attempted to be efficient, she felt the least prepared for dealing with parents: ". . . There are so many different types of parents, so I'm not prepared for who is going to come through the door next."

Relations with parents continued to be an area where Kim felt least prepared. By the end of January parents and teachers met to discuss the possibility of passing or retaining students. She revealed her apprehension by explaining that many parents ". . . don't see a problem, but they are not in the classroom . . . and they don't see the big picture." In January, Kim was sick for a week. Because she liked to be prepared and organized a week ahead of time, being sick a week in January created two problems for her. First, Kim felt unprepared for parent teacher conferences, and second, she fell behind in preparing her lesson plans. Looking forward to getting her energy back, Kim admitted that she had not been as diligent as she should have been in satisfying the district requirement to keep up with her portfolio. Her goal for the next month was to have her portfolio completed.

In March, Kim felt least prepared for retaining students. Kim found that retaining required a lot of documentation and the meeting of strict deadlines. She was too unfamiliar with the system to stay on top of all the paperwork, but was able to meet with the parents of these students who might possibly be retained next year. Reflecting back on the year, Kim felt least prepared when dealing with parents and the home situations of her urban students. Kim felt unsure how to deal with certain family situations that arose during the school year; for example, not having the support of some parents to help their student with homework.

Table 13

Kim Least Prepared

Time Period	Least Prepared
August-November	working with parents organization
December-February	working with parents organization teacher portfolio
March-May	retention assessments working with parents

The teachers' self perception of their preparedness in this study differed from a previous study. In 1994, Lang surveyed urban first year teachers and found that teachers in her study felt best prepared in setting up classroom reading/language programs, understanding the importance of planning, and understanding the importance of assessment. In that same study, first year teachers did not feel well prepared to manage student behavior, conduct long term planning, or to teach mathematics. The three teachers in this study do not parallel Lang's results. Two teachers in this study felt that they were least prepared to teach reading/language programs, especially in the area of writing. Also, all first year teachers felt prepared to manage student behavior. This may be due to the extra focus on student discipline that was included in the Professional Development School programs they experienced. Also, the three teachers in this study did not have problems with long

term planning; all school systems provided curriculum guides, and the first year teachers knew how to use them. Only one teacher struggled with the teaching of mathematics.

The ethnographic interviews of the three teachers highlighted areas that they felt were an important part of their Professional Development School Preparation program. They were familiar with urban classrooms, working with urban students, and instruction in urban schools and spent less time in adjusting to the urban classroom. The three teachers in this study drew upon their knowledge that they observed during their preparation program and reflected back on these experiences. This helped them solve issues in the classroom. This was evident in the teacher and principal interviews, and the teacher survey. Two of the teachers in this study felt least prepared to teach communication skills, writing, and working with parents. They felt further instruction during their preparation programs in these areas would have been helpful.

### *Discipline*

Unlike those in the research of Veenman (1984) and Burden (1980), the teachers in this study showed no evidence of difficulty in handling discipline. One teacher, when interviewed in August, perceived that she was most prepared to cope with discipline issues. One teacher had a concern about discipline in September, but within a month mastered the challenge. None of the school principals stated that any of the teachers in this study had difficulties with discipline.

In August, before the students arrived, Tina felt most prepared to cope with discipline issues. However, in September and October, she began to have concerns about the uncontrolled classroom chatter. But by November that issue had been resolved.

When asked why discipline was not a major problem for her, especially in an urban school, Tina credited her success to a program she experienced in the Professional Development School. She used parts of Freiberg's Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline program (Freiberg, 1999) from her Professional Development School experience to create her own discipline program. She also acknowledged her close contact with parents as a factor in achieving effective discipline. Finally, Tina stated, "I think probably the biggest thing with discipline is being consistent with it, following through, if you say you are going to do something, do it."

David began in August to develop an effective discipline plan. His focus on discipline continued into September. For the first month of school, David tried a discipline plan that he quickly abandoned when it did not work for him. He asked several teachers how they handled discipline in the classroom, and visited a colleague's classroom to observe her approach. He then came up with a new plan which he continued to use. However, by October, discipline was no longer a focus. David credited part of his success to being older and male. Responding to questions, David acknowledged that he had the respect of his students and that they knew he was concerned about them. He developed good rapport with his students, and learned to be consistent.

Kim had no concerns about discipline. She credited her success to establishing the rules the very first day, being consistent, and having a good group of students. She explained that ". . . Once you connect with them they do care. They don't want to go to time out. They seem genuinely concerned when I am upset with their behavior. So I don't have to fuss at them or yell

at them." Kim modeled her discipline plan on one she learned in a workshop. The model presented the appropriate behavior visually, which Kim found well-suited to children who could not yet read. She incorporated this program into the school-wide plan. If she saw or heard inappropriate behavior, she ignored the behavior while at the same time providing clues for appropriate behavior. She explained: "If a student has a question and begins to call out my name over and over, I ignore the behavior and remind the students that I only answer silent hands." By praising students who followed the rules, she encouraged other students to do likewise. After the Christmas holidays, Kim adjusted the behavior modification system. All of the students were receiving treats at the end of the week for their good behavior. Weaning her students off the rewards, she gave rewards sporadically. She said: "Now they don't know when I am going to give them a reward." Occasionally when Kim got a new student he or she would try to disrupt the routine, but Kim stated that "it only takes a few days to realize that it [disruptive behavior] is not going to work."

The literature on first year teachers (Burden, 1980; Veenman, 1984) shows that typically new teachers struggle with discipline issues. In a study by Veenman (1984) principals stated that first year teachers have difficulty with discipline. The three principals with teachers involved in this study felt that the teachers did not struggle with discipline issues and that they maintained effective classroom control. The first year teachers knew what effective discipline looked like, and were able to model effective discipline strategies in their classrooms. The three first year teachers in this study gave credit to their ability of classroom management to their teacher preparation program. The three

teachers highlighted an area of success for the Professional Development Schools and need for further study to observe if other first year teachers have the same type of success.

#### *Teacher Observations/Evaluations*

All first year teachers in this study were observed and evaluated by their principals or other school officials. At the end of November, none of the first year teachers had been formally evaluated. The lack of evaluation by principals prompted the questions posed to the teachers in this study: How do first year teachers know if they are doing a good job teaching? How do new teachers form their expectations? All of the teachers struggled with this question. Since Tina had not received any feedback, she was not sure if the administration was really aware of what she did in her classroom. Tina looked at other teachers' lesson plans to see if hers had all the right elements in them. She sought guidance from the communication skills specialist since that was the area in which she needed the most support.

David sought to model himself after several teachers whose teaching styles he admired. He tried to imitate what they were doing, but was unable to assess his own efforts. As he indicated, ". . .the more I do it the more I realize I have to learn." Kim was also watched and learned from other teachers. She and one other teacher learned much by meeting with two kindergarten teachers every Wednesday. Kim also utilized her school's well planned curriculum guide with its weekly schedule of activities and the standards of learning that needed to be taught. For Kim, a good curriculum gave direction, kept teachers focused, and at least partially compensated for the lack of formal evaluation and feedback: "So even though you might not have an administrator



constantly at your disposal, they give you a lot of material to work with."

By the December interviews David had not yet formally been observed. The teacher specialist/assistant principal had been in his room to observe him, but because he was always being called away, he never completed the observation. Tina was formally observed the last week in November. Her principal observed during her communications block, the area of content in which she had the least confidence in teaching. She would have preferred that the principal observe a different content area for her first observation. Tina did receive some good suggestions and feedback, but was disappointed in several areas. One suggestion given was that her lesson plans lacked detail. Tina stated that her lesson plans were five pages long for each day so she found it difficult to understand how could they lack detail. She also perceived that other teachers on her grade level did not have as detailed plans as she. Tina did not go to the principal for clarification, but went to her co-workers to see what format they utilized in their lesson plans.

This seeming inconsistency in judgment was difficult for Tina. She wanted to work in an environment for a principal who was fair and consistent. Another area of concern for Tina was the principal's suggestions to improve her teaching techniques. When Tina asked the principal to clarify what she meant, she gave two examples. First, the observer wanted the students to sit in groups. Tina had already tried that seating plan with her students and found that it did not work. Tina found the best arrangement for her students was to work in pairs. However, following her observation conference, Tina put the students back into groups.

Second, the principal stated that fourth graders do not like to sit on carpet squares. Tina said that she did not make her students sit on carpet squares that they just liked to use them. Following the conference, Tina held her reading groups at a rectangular table. Although Tina knew that her strategies were effective, she felt powerless to disagree with her supervisor. In making learning environment decisions, Tina felt that effective instruction should weigh more heavily than supervisor preference.

#### *Teacher Preparation Program*

Typically, new teachers report that their preparation programs did not provide them with the skills needed to work effectively (Feistritzer, Quelle, & Chester, 1990). Teachers in this study reported that they felt prepared. Principals in the study saw these teachers as prepared because they did not have to spend as much time training the teachers. The teachers knew what to do in a classroom and knew how to work with urban students. The three teachers knew how to use the curriculum outlined by the school districts when working with these students. Similarly, the teachers reported that they held realistic expectations when entering urban classrooms because they had similar experiences in urban classrooms during their teacher preparation program. Another explanation for the success of these three first year teachers is due to their flexibility. When problems occurred in the classroom the teachers would try new ideas to solve classroom challenges.

The three first year teachers in this study thought that their teacher preparation program prepared them well, or very well in areas of subject matter knowledge, teaching methods, classroom management and discipline, organizing instruction, recognizing student learning styles, understanding child development, and

working effectively within the school organization. This was different from the 1990 Profile of Teachers in the U.S. where 46% of teachers did not think their teacher preparation program prepared them for working in the schools; 35 % reported that they were not prepared for recognizing student learning styles and 26 % said their preparation program did not prepare them well for organizing instruction.

When asked what experiences or knowledge they had used from their Professional Development School experiences, the teachers in this study found it difficult to recall specific examples. One teacher in this study did state that he felt more in touch with academia because he still could contact his professors. Another teacher commented that doing student teaching in a Professional Development School enhanced preparation and gave "real world" insight into what it would be like to work in an urban setting. A different viewpoint was offered by another first year teacher who felt there was no substitute for actual work experience: "I think that it is one of those things you don't experience until you are in that job. I felt prepared to set up my lesson plans, to find learning activities, and to work out the groups and scheduling and stuff. But it is the actual getting it to really work, I think that just takes some experience."

The three teachers valued their Professional Development School experiences because they saw a variety of programs dealing with co-teaching, looping, and departmentalization. Also the principals in the Professional Development Schools were willing to take risks and to try new ideas. Several of the teachers expected all principals would have those characteristics, and were discouraged when they did not observe these characteristics in

their principals. One teacher in this study was so upset with her principal that she left at the end of the school year to work in an urban school whose principal had those characteristics. The first year teachers in this study also commented that they were more willing to work with other teachers because of the collaboration they experienced during their Professional Development School experiences.

There were differences in teacher's challenges. Kim was the only teacher in this study who did not struggle with teaching communication skills. She attributed this success to her experiences in the Professional Development School program. She student taught third grade in a school whose focus on communication skills was emphasized and reinforced in blocked instruction where students worked in groups. In her student teaching setting, Kim observed how effective it was when she said, "I think that [blocked instruction] helped me be prepared as a teacher to work with and create reading groups." Kim also stated that her student teaching experience was the only exposure she had to guided reading. "We did not talk about it at the university, but during student teaching, we had workshops . . . . I think that language arts is probably my strongest area because of the exposure to it in the Professional Development Schools. It has made me more prepared in my own classroom".

When first year teachers were asked what else was needed by a first year teacher that was not covered at the university, the teachers offered a few suggestions. One teacher suggested more preparation on how to differentiate instruction for students. Two of the teachers thought that their language arts/communication skills instruction could have been stronger. David stated that he

really did not have a great deal of specific language arts experiences in the classrooms. He wanted to see more interactive video tapes of real students being analyzed by experts, especially in the areas of teaching editing skills and conducting literature circles. Tina would have also liked a course on teaching the whole communication skills block. She felt that the one or two classes were not enough. She would have liked more classes on how to teach writing, how to vary guided reading instruction, how to focus more on the standards of learning, and how to identify the best teaching models for urban students. Tina also felt that teacher education needed to be more practical and less theoretical.

Kim thought that her university could not have prepared her better. She conceded that some things had to be learned from experience. For example, there were always going to be student tests and assessments. Kim observed that they talked about tests at the university, but she had no real concept of what that meant until she taught, especially for kids who cannot read.

Several of the teachers commented on the contrast between real teaching and student teaching. David observed that "I think I rolled into teaching thinking it would be just like student teaching, and of course it was not. Until you actually get rolling into the classroom you don't know that." David felt that student teaching reflected too much the prerogatives of an individual teacher and what he or she actually permitted the student teacher to do. For example, David's cooperating teacher handled the day-to-day business of the classroom even when David was in full control of the classroom. "I really did not know what it was like to be all by yourself in the classroom," David said. Another teacher commented that ". . . nothing is really as overwhelming as

it sounds. As a new teacher it is very overwhelming with all the things they throw at you and it seems like it is not going to all fall into place, but it does." All of the teachers felt that the Professional Development School's combination of field-based courses, campus courses, and classroom mentoring provided the optimal environment for learning how to teach.

During a principal interview one principal spoke of the contrast between student teaching in a Professional Development School and the first year of teaching in a traditional school. The principal stated that student teachers or interns may not realize all that is going on when working as student teachers. The student teacher may realize that the teacher has great classroom discipline, but does not know the thought, planning, and effort required to achieve it. It is not until they have their own classrooms, and are required to maintain effective classroom discipline, that they begin to question how it happens and to work on strategies for achieving it. In a Professional Development School the teachers can go back to their mentors to ask questions and observe again. This often happens when first year teachers are placed in the same school where they completed their student teaching. Another principal commented that the Professional Development School provides a "network of people already established that you [the student teacher] feel comfortable working with because they are all part of your [his or her] training. The Professional Development School setting has all of these support systems in place that just don't exist anywhere else."

The three teachers and the principals involved in this study valued the teacher preparation programs at the universities. The

three principals in this study thought that the first year teachers involved in this study were average or better than typical teachers. During the interviews principals stated the teacher's success was due to observing urban classrooms that were effective during their teacher preparation programs. Principals reported that teachers held personality characteristics that helped them be successful such as persistence, being energetic, and the ability to build a positive rapport with students. This was also validated by the monthly ethnographic interviews of first year teachers when they indicated that they felt energetic and that they had established positive working relationships with the students. This finding was similar to the findings of Long and Morrow (1995). They found that Professional Development School graduates were prepared better for their first year of teaching than graduates from traditional student teaching programs.

#### *Teacher Focus*

This study followed three teachers during their first year of teaching. The teachers were asked during their monthly ethnographic interviews about their teaching focus. Their responses to this question could then be analyzed with the characteristics from the teacher developmental models to observe how these three teachers change throughout their first year. Teachers focusing on themselves are at early stages of development and teachers who transition into thinking about the needs of their students are in later stages of development.

Tina began her first year focusing on the classroom climate and creating self worth in her students. She wanted to ". . . make sure the kids are comfortable with me. If they need anything, then they can come to me." As the year went on she found herself

focusing on controlling the chattiness of her students (see Table 14). However, by October her focus had shifted to issues related to curriculum and the specific communication skills, math, science, and social studies skills required of the fourth graders. In November, Tina's focus shifted again to personal professionalism as she sought to improve the organization of instruction for the next nine weeks. Tina reflected, "It is a hard nine weeks because you have Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is choppy and confusing with all sorts of stuff going on."

During the middle part of the school year, Tina continued to focus on the academic and curriculum needs of her students. Her school developed a road map to guide teacher planning. Also during this period she accepted the position of her building's lead science teacher. In January, as lead science teacher, she worked on the science fair, went to different rooms doing simple experiments, and talked to students about the science fair. During this period she also concentrated on academic accountability and student discipline, handling one student who proved to be problematic. The problem student had worked his way through her discipline plan and was sent to the office. Tina found that some days disciplining the students was very taxing and she felt like she was just ". . . making it through the day." She encouraged the students to take pride in their work and to turn in assignments that were neat and accurate. During this period Tina sought to increase classroom participation and to help her students' self esteem.

During March, Tina taught a month long math unit on division, after which, several of the students still struggled with the concept. Disappointed with her students' achievement and her own



inability to reteach concepts, Tina rethought her approach to the subject and identified new approaches, strategies, and techniques to help her students understand the concepts.

At the end of the year, Tina focused on making sure her students had learned the major math, science, social studies, and communication skills needed to be successful the next year. She reviewed the major areas of instruction and retaught the areas where her students showed weaknesses.

Analyzing Tina's focus throughout her first year of teaching began with her concentrating on issues that related to herself. She was focused on her classroom environment. During the middle of the year, Tina's focus was on creating and managing the learning environment, representing and presenting the subject matter, and evaluating student learning. However, Tina was not able to accept full responsibility for instruction and struggled at the end of the year making sure students had mastered basic skills. Tina's focus tended to shift as outside influences impacted the classroom environment such as bomb threats, issues with coworkers and the principal. These outside influences pulled her attention from focusing on students' needs. At times when Tina struggled to work within the bureaucracy of the school she would become frustrated. This appeared to hinder her development as a teacher.

Table 14

Teaching Focus of Tina

Time Period	Teaching Focus	Discussion
September-November	classroom climate	Tina created a positive classroom climate where the students were nice to each other and believed in themselves.
	student self-esteem	Tina focused on the self-esteem of her students so they believed that they could do whatever they wanted to do and be successful.
	student chatter	Tina focused on controlling students talking to others.
	curriculum issues	Tina focused on specific skills she needed to teach in the core areas of communication skills, math, science, and social studies.
	organization	Tina was starting a new nine weeks so she was trying to get organized. (table continues)

December-February	student needs	Tina tried to focus on the needs of her students and what they needed to learn academically. She also tried to get the students to accept some responsibility for their learning.
	"making it through the day"	Tina had trouble with a particular student in terms of his behavior.
	pride in work	Tina worked with students on turning in neat and accurate work that they would be proud to turn in.
	increase involvement	Tina tried to get all students involved in class participation and not letting the same kids do all the work.
March-May	math	Several of Tina's students struggled with division and she tried to figure out how to help them.

(table continues)

all content covered

Tina made sure all students were on target in each subject area so that they would be prepared for the next year.

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David began the school year focusing on developing an effective discipline plan and on structuring the school day (see Table 15). By October he shifted his focus to differentiated instruction to meet the needs of his students. He also carefully correlated his students' homework, class work, and tests with the Virginia Standards of Learning. This focus represented his plan for assessing the needs of his students. When asked how he was developing as a teacher, he stated that he felt more assertive in the classroom. He also felt able to get the students' attention. He felt more confident in designing his own lesson plans instead of copying them from the internet, or from the curriculum guide. He said, "I'm taking lessons now that I have and adapting them, and putting in elements that I think they lack." He also expressed growing confidence in dealing with parents.

In December, David's focus shifted to issues related to the curriculum. Over the next few months he assessed students to see what they were learning, identified students with weaknesses in various areas, supplemented basal readers with novel studies to teach communication skills, and emphasized skills in both reading and writing. At the end of February, David prepared his students for the Standards of Learning test, focusing his review on social

studies concepts and making sure that he covered all the material that needed to be taught.

During March, David concentrated on covering curriculum areas to make sure his students understood major concepts. He held after school sessions for students struggling to understand social studies concepts. David also got his students involved in the young authors writing program and family reading night. These two initiatives increased family involvement by giving parents a chance to see how their children were doing in reading and writing. He also retaught multiplication after diagnosing student problems with the multiplication of two digit numbers.

Toward the end of the year David prepared his students for the final tests. He conducted reviews of previously learned material during his morning warm up and mini review sessions, and played games with his students to reinforce previously learned concepts. David reflected that the students found the reviews interesting because of his unique phrasing for the warm up drills: ". . . let's look over all of what we have learned this year."

Analyzing the teaching focus of David throughout the year he quickly transitioned from focusing on himself to the needs of his students. David's focus then continued on the needs of his students when he concentrated on differentiating the needs of individual students. David developed more as a teacher when comparing him to Tina. This may have been in part due the the positive feedback he received from his coworkers and principal during the year. Once he solved a particular classroom challenge and receive validation from a coworker, he quickly focused on other effective teaching strategies to meet the needs of his students. Piland's (1992) research supports this theory when she

found teacher development was influenced when teachers developed their own teaching skills and received successful evaluations.

Table 15

Teaching Focus of David

Time Period	Teaching Focus	Discussion
September-November	structuring school day	David tried to figure out how he was going to structure the school day in collaboration with the other grade level teachers.
	discipline	David focused on getting an effective discipline plan in place that actually worked. David's students required a structured program.
	differentiation	David focused on identifying students at different instructional levels and trying to adjust to their needs.

(table continues)

December-February      curriculum issues

David focused on keeping up with the pacing in the curriculum so that all the standards of learning were taught. David also introduced novel studies to teach communication skills.

testing

David focused on preparing students to take the state test.

March-May              understand concepts

David worked hard in all content areas to make sure students were understanding concepts.

reviewing concepts

David reviewed past concepts and tried to prepare his students for the end of the year tests.

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During her first year, Kim was teaching Kindergarten in a half day program. She began her year focusing on curriculum

issues, trying to get all concepts that she needed to teach into a half day format (see Table 16). By October, Kim focused on trying to teach in spite of all the testing that was taking place. She found that testing was taking up a lot of time needed for instruction. Kim was concerned about how to meet the needs of students who were special education candidates. She also struggled with how to involve parents. When asked how she developed as a teacher, she stated that every good and bad experience had taught her something that could help her become a better teacher. She declared, "I can change what I am doing to make my classroom better just based on those things I have experienced that I know are not going to work or things that I have found out really worked well and I try to continue to use those." She stated that the interruptions with all the testing had taught her to be flexible and creative. Because Kim knew that her attitude would affect everything else in the classroom, she learned not to appear overwhelmed and frustrated.

In December, Kim solved the problem of fitting all the curriculum needs into a half day kindergarten setting. She began to integrate subjects. It was a challenge for her to teach math daily, so she incorporated math into the communication skills block and used children's literature to teach some math concepts. Kim also continued to focus on organization skills and was determined to remain organized in the classroom and not get behind. She found herself busy talking to parents whose children were weak academically to make sure that they were aware of their child's academic situation. Wanting documentation so that there would be no discrepancies in what the students did or did not know, Kim focused on the instructional needs of her students and



preparing them for the first grade.

In March, Kim had the opportunity to attend a reading and writing conference. She came back and immediately implemented several new elements into her instructional program. In April Kim focused her teaching on a culminating activity that tied all of the subject areas together. Her students learned how people were different and about the geographic locations of children throughout the world. The students were required to find specific countries on a map and utilize the computer to observe several web sites with photos of children from those countries. That week her students were visiting countries in Asia and Africa, and were busy making passports and packing their suitcases. In May, Kim's students completed the district-wide testing required of all kindergarten students, and she completed her portfolio assessments on each student. Kim found the spring cycle of testing and assessments easier than the fall cycle. Kim was more comfortable with assessment, and felt that, during the school year, she had learned a great deal about assessing kindergartners. "It's not as if I'm going to memorize how to give this test, but just giving assessments in general is going to help so I can weave it into the curriculum." During her first year of teaching, Kim learned to assess her students and to integrate assessment into the curriculum, a skill which helped her document what her students had learned, and identify their learning needs.

When analyzing the focus of Kim she quickly changed from her needs to the needs of her students. At the beginning of the year Kim was focused on all of the curriculum and testing needs for the school. Once she became familiar with the testing procedures and curriculum needs Kim solved the problems and she began focusing

more on the needs of her students. Kim entered into the classroom with knowledge of an effective discipline program so she did not waste valuable teaching time developing a plan that worked with her students. She was able to observe what teaching strategies worked best with her students and maintain a classroom routine which centered around small group instruction.

Table 16

Teaching Focus of Kim

Time Period	Teaching Focus	Discussion
September-November	curriculum issues	Kim scheduled all the curriculum needs in a half day kindergarten program.
	testing	Kim assessed students for district tests and portfolio testing.
	organization	Kim planed ahead to make sure the content was covered and maintained the routine of teaching students in small groups.

(table continues)

December-February	curriculum	Kim made sure that all the content was taught, however time was a factor so Kim began to integrate subjects.
	organization	Kim tried to be organized in her planning, communicating to parents, and in making sure the documentation was there if a student needed to be retained.
	instruction	Kim worked with her students on reading words, and in science focused on weather.
March-May	reading and writing	Kim attended a conference on reading and writing. Kim focused on implementing what she learned into her instructional program.
	integrating content	Kim focused on a culminating activity that integrated several units of study.

(table continues)

assessment

Kim focused on the district's end-of-the-year tests and portfolio assessments on her students.

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When an analysis of the monthly ethnographic interviews, teachers shifted their focus quickly because they were familiar with issues typical of urban classrooms. Their classrooms quickly developed routines and the teachers and the students were able to focus more readily on learning. In the November and December period, all three of the first year teachers in this study began to shift their focus from their own needs (setting up their classroom, structuring the school day, organizing themselves) to meeting their students' needs (diversity, assessment, critical skills). Their focus centered on the curriculum, trying to differentiate instruction, and planning how to teach the subject matter in ways that best met the students' needs. In addition to focusing on what the students needed to learn, the teachers also sought strategies that best fit the needs of their students. For example, David began to pull away from the basal reader because his students wanted to read entire novels rather than just excerpts. David found that his students responded positively when he introduced novel studies as part of his instructional program. He commented: "I'm trying to work it in so I won't give them too much, but they want more. They want to read more than two chapters, usually three or four."

An issue, which was not regularly addressed in the literature about first year teachers, began to surface as teachers focused on

how to help students learn. All teachers mentioned in their December interview that their students were having difficulty retaining the information that they were teaching.

Frustrated that her students were not studying for tests in the areas of social studies and science, Tina gave each of her students a study guide and assigned textbook sections for review as homework. Of twenty study guides she only received seven completed ones back. It seemed to Tina that her students had given up on doing their jobs as students. David had similar concerns about student retention of information. He noticed the problem when he was working with one of his students on equivalent fractions. David commented: "It was like he had never done his homework. He had done it, but he had not remembered anything." Kim also struggled with the issue of student learning and retention. She found that many of her students struggled to understand basic concepts, and needed constant reinforcing. Reinforcement was a challenge for many of Kim's and David's students because their parents did not understand the material and were unable to help them review.

Knowing what works with students is a skill that every good teacher develops (Reynolds, 1992). All first year teachers in this study acquired this skill to some degree. Tina observed student responses to the material she taught, "Typically if I am presenting lessons, there is involvement in it, and I know whether or not they are paying attention to me." Tina also noticed if students were asking questions. She commented that "The more questions they ask the better because then they are thinking more." David also observed the behavior of his students. "There are a couple of the kids in the class who are my benchmarks to see

how the lesson is going . . . . I keep an eye on them to see how they are responding. Some of my lower kids space out a little bit, so I tend to stay near them, and I try to break up my lesson with the kids." Kim also monitored how the students were responding, but she also had the students run the routines of the classroom, especially in the area of reviewing previous skills. Each morning she began the day with circle time, a time to review previous reading and math skills. This activity, completely run by the students, provided an incentive to remember and learn material, but it also allowed Kim to assess the level at which students were understanding the concepts.

The first year teachers found a morning review of concepts taught the previous day helped student retention. David sent home packets of activities that students could review over the summer, and Tina utilized mnemonic devices and clumped material together to help students remember content. The teachers also connected material previously learned to new content.

As the year came to a close all teachers began to review previous information and prepare students for the end-of-the-year tests. The teachers in this study were very concerned about preparing their students for the following year. In order to identify areas of weakness or deficiency, they worked hard to assess what their students knew. Even after the assessments had occurred, the teachers were concerned that their students had the skills needed to be successful at the next grade level. For example, David knew that his students were weakest in writing. Even though the writing assessments had already taken place, the students continued to work hard at writing.

*Developmental Stages of Teaching: August-November*

Teacher development stages were used to offer perspective for viewing teacher change and adjustment. Observing how teachers change and develop will help to identify the needs of urban teachers. Teachers at different stages have different needs. Research has shown that teachers at higher developmental stages utilize more effective teaching strategies (Reynolds, 1992).

From the first meeting with Tina, she appeared to be very confident about her first year of teaching. She began preparing for her first year a month in advance. She was excited about working with a great group of teachers whom she believed were going to help her make the transition into her first year. During our first meeting, Tina often referred to her Professional Development School teaching experiences. She was in what Fuller (1969) described as the preteaching stage of development (see Table 17), a stage in which teachers have few specific concerns related to teaching and who think of teaching largely in terms of their own experiences.

By the end of September Tina was in the induction phase (Burke, Fessler, & Christensen, 1984) and the novice stage of development (Berliner, 1988). Being socialized into the system at the induction stage, teachers strive for acceptance by students, peers and supervisors. They focus on achieving a comfort level when handling everyday problems and issues. Teachers at the novice stage of development learn the tasks that need to be performed, conform to rules and procedures, and are rational and somewhat inflexible in their behavior. Tina concentrated on trying to gain some comfort in handling everyday problems, such as student

talking. She worked on finding a seating arrangement that would work for everybody. "If it doesn't work then I just find another way the next day," she commented. Tina also learned the tasks to be performed by teachers, which included planning field trips, designing lesson plans, maintaining classroom control, completing student portfolios and having students take responsibility for their actions. Tina focused on the concepts that her students needed to learn. She had not yet made the connections across the subjects, which would signal entry into the next stage of development.

Tina was in the induction phase of her development from August to November especially in the area of socializing into the school. She began with a positive attitude towards teaching and having other teachers support her during her first year. In September she was supported by the special education teacher who helped her make the transition to an inclusion model that met the needs of her special education students. In November Tina had the most trouble organizing her communication skills block. She worked with the communication skills specialist to try to fit everything into a two hour time span. Tina's October interview concentrated primarily on being observed by the principal. She struggled to gain feedback from the principal that would confirm she was doing a good job. For the first time, Tina lacked her usual confidence; she seemed anxious about being observed, and felt that she would not be able to relax until it was over. In November, she started to express frustration in dealing with the paperwork associated with teaching, feeling that it was useless to spend hours completing documentation forms on students that nobody reviewed. She began to feel resentful about completing paperwork, which she



considered inconsequential, when she could be doing things better to meet the needs of her students.

David's first interview focused on how he networked with other teachers to see what they did and how they approached their classroom. He relied on the guidance of fellow teachers to help him make the transition into his first year of teaching. Although he was a little apprehensive, David was at the preteaching stage of development (see Table 17), and was excited about his first year of teaching.

September's interview with David centered on how he learned the tasks essential to teaching. He gained valuable experience by working on developing a discipline plan that worked, getting a sense of pacing with the curriculum, and learning how to do grades. David struggled to understand and apply all of the school's rules. For example, all the fourth graders did a book report every month that followed a specific format. David discovered this procedure at the end of his first month of teaching, which only allowed his students one week to meet the deadline. He recalled: ". . . I felt a little behind the eight ball on those things because I think we should have communicated a little better." This was an indication that David was functioning at the novice and induction stage of teaching where he learned all of the tasks that needed to be performed "on the job" and was being socialized into the system of teaching.

By the October interview, David showed evidence of having moved to the next stage of development, the advanced beginner (Berliner, 1988) and competency building stage (Burke, Fessler, & Christensen, 1984). He did not make the complete transition to the higher stage of development, but he began to show signs of

particular elements in the next stage. David's focus in the classroom involved ". . . differentiating kids at different levels and trying to adjust to their needs." David sought out new materials and resources on the internet and in the school district's curriculum guides. He also gained confidence in teaching lessons that he adapted to incorporate the elements he thought they lacked. As he gained confidence in his abilities as a teacher, David abandoned the scripted class in teacher manuals and, at the suggestion of his mentor, tried novel studies as part of communication skills. David, however, still expressed some apprehension about following the rules of the building, ". . . afraid of not crossing every 't' and dotting every 'i'."

David continued to struggle with adequacy issues into November, yet he admitted that he was very critical of his teaching. He received positive feedback from others, but still felt that he had a lot to learn. He worked hard to find new information on topics he was covering, and to try new ways to present the material. For example, David made the following comment about one of his internet searches: "I visited a web site the other night that talked about multiplication, how they teach it and how it was traditionally taught. They had all kinds of devices: sound, sight, things that work with kinesthetic motions and such. That sounds right to me, but I realized that a lot of the way I am teaching I am basing it on the way I learned." He also reflected on his college class discussions about the best ways to teach. His biggest challenge came from the communication skills block in the areas of literature and writing.

Kim's first interview centered on her efforts to get all of the curriculum needs into her working day. The school system in

which she worked offered a half day kindergarten, therefore, her main concern was how to fit all of the subjects into the allotted time. Kim stated that the district wanted her to spend an hour-and-a-half on language arts, an hour-and-a-half on math, thirty minutes on social studies three times a week, and then some time on science. Students were only in school for three hours, out of which also came a break for snack and resource. She appeared to be inflexible in her behavior, which is typical of a teacher at the novice stage of development (see Table 17). Kim also appeared to be at the induction stage of development as she tried to gain acceptance from students, peers, and supervisors. Moreover, Kim was most nervous when dealing with parents.

In September Kim struggled to meet all the curriculum needs of the district. Testing took up a large portion of her day, so she was unable to devote the necessary time to teaching the core subjects. Kim tried to balance teaching strategies with classroom leadership, learning how to conduct one-on-one testing with each student while maintaining structure in her classroom. She also struggled to become organized. "The more I try to get organized the more stuff comes up that I have to try to fit in and there isn't time," she observed. Kim functioned at the induction stage of teaching, trying to deal with everyday problems and issues as they came up.

Kim's struggle to meet all of her curriculum needs was not resolved until November. It was not until testing was over that she was able, with few distractions, to get in a solid week of teaching. She was finally able to plan several days ahead, which she felt was a great accomplishment. For the first time Kim felt a sense of comfort in meeting the everyday challenges of teaching.

She also experienced increased acceptance as a teacher by the other teachers. Kim and the other kindergarten teacher began meeting every week to discuss what objectives would be taught the following week. They also began to share materials. November was a pivotal point in Kim's development, the point at which she finally gained confidence in her abilities as a teacher.

Table 17

Teacher Development Stages: August-November

	Skill Acquisition	Reorientation of Concerns	Life Cycle
Tina	Novice	Preteaching	Induction
David	Novice/ Advanced Beginner	Preteaching/ Early Teaching	Induction/ Competency Building
Kim	Novice	Preteaching/ Early Teaching	Induction

*Teacher Development: December-February*

Tina's December interview began with a discussion of a bomb threat that had been recently made on the school. This event made Tina feel insecure and did nothing to help her develop as a teacher. The teachers were not told of the bomb threat by the administration; they found out from the parents. Unsure how to handle the situation, Tina did not know what to tell the parents when questioned about the incident. This frustration and unease continued throughout the interview. Tina functioned at the induction phase of development as she tried to achieve some level

of comfort and security dealing with everyday problems (see Table 18).

At the beginning of the year, Tina worked every night late into the evening on school work; but by January, that had changed. She was no longer consumed with work. She needed to take a night or two off a week from school work. She stated, "I go day by day, and I really try not to let this interfere with my life anymore." Tina eventually felt that the administration did not really value her opinions or input. In fact, she felt that her principal was autocratic in the way she ran the school. Tina, however, did not give up on teaching her students, but focused on the areas in which she was being rewarded in her teaching. For example, as the science contact person in her building, she was very excited about utilizing her leadership abilities in the school's science fair project. Tina compared her school experience with her student teaching experiences in the Professional Development School program. She said that she missed the supportive, cohesive atmosphere where the whole school worked together. At times, Tina still viewed teaching through the lenses of her own experiences; she had not made the complete transition from the preteaching stage to the early teaching stage of development.

The novice teacher understands the meanings of terms such as higher order questions, reinforcement, learning disabled and cooperative learning. The behavior of the novice is rational, somewhat inflexible, and tends to conform to the rules and procedures they were told to follow (Berliner, 1988). David showed signs that he had made the transition from novice or beginner to advanced beginner stage of development (see Table 18). For example, by December, David started using cooperative groups in

science. He had remembered from college that it was an effective teaching practice, but it was not working well for him and his students. He commented that "The recorder really does not have anything to do until the very end and I am finding the kids are very bored by it. So I am thinking about chopping it down and changing the numbers." A teacher like David who is an advanced beginner learns when to break rules and when to follow them. David knew that cooperative learning was a great way to teach, but he was also aware of his students' needs. Thus he changed the cooperative learning groups and tasks to fit the needs of his students. A novice teacher would not be able to adapt as David did to the needs of his or her students.

David also showed signs of transitioning to the competent teacher stage of development. One of the characteristics of a competent teacher is accepting personal responsibility for instruction. David accepted personal responsibility for his instructional decisions. In January, David felt that he was not planning far enough ahead, especially when he compared himself to other teachers. During the interview, David said he wished the teachers on his grade level were better at planning together; but he stopped short of blaming anyone and he asserted ". . . it is my own fault."

David also demonstrated signs of transitioning between the early teaching and late teaching stages of development outlined by Fuller (1969). Teachers in the early stage of development focus on and raise questions about themselves being adequate teachers. David was still concerned how he was performing as a teacher. He asserted, "I'm not real happy about my teaching, and I think I can do better." A teacher in the later stages of teaching focuses on

the students' needs, and David continued to show evidence of such behavior. For example, he noticed that his students became tired of reading short selections from books, so he developed a novel study to use in the classroom. According to David, "The kids really seemed to enjoy that . . . and it was a book that held their interest."

David remained in the competency stage of development throughout the rest of this study, searching for new ways to help students learn. By the end of February, he felt a little more confident about himself and his teaching abilities. Reflecting this confidence, David made the following statement: "I talk to other teachers that say 'well I really didn't start doing this until my second or third year.' so I'm thinking that maybe what I am doing is ok and that's what should be expected your first year."

Kim began to show signs of moving from the novice to the advanced beginner stage of development (see Table 18). She became more involved in the learning process, trying to make connections across contexts. Kim, however, found it difficult to accomplish math and language arts every day in a half-day kindergarten program. So she tried to find books which also taught math concepts so that she could integrate the subjects. By January, Kim made the transition to the advanced beginner stage of development, having become very focused and involved in the learning process of her students. She now felt comfortable with the academic progress of her students.

Kim showed no signs of being concerned with herself as a teacher or with problems of adequacy. "I feel pretty confident about what I am doing," she commented. The focus of her interviews

appeared to be on the students, not on observations or evaluations, a clear indication of her transition to the late teaching stage of development. She took more time to participate in workshops and inservices that would help her acquire new teaching skills and ideas. Making strides in her development from the induction stage to the competency building stage, Kim worked on being accepted by her students, peers, and supervisors, but it appeared that she had moved on in her development. By January, she was not as concerned that the parents may be upset with her if she told them of their child's lack of academic progress, instead she felt confident about her documentation of the students' academic progress and could justify her reasons for possibly retaining students. Kim also felt competent having students learn in groups. She had improved her teaching abilities and skills so that even when the students were not being monitored directly, they were able to monitor themselves. These examples, although not exhaustive or comprehensive, are compelling characteristics found in teachers who function at the competency building stage of development.

How teachers handled paperwork and bureaucracy issues in their classroom affected teacher development and became a noticeable theme in the middle of the year. There were noticeable differences in how the first year teachers responded to outside demands on their time. Tina became resentful of the paperwork, failing to see the value of the many forms that had to be completed. David's view of paperwork, unlike Tina's, was that though difficult to keep up with, paperwork was a necessary tool to make teachers accountable for their students' progress. Kim saw paperwork as necessary, concluding that some of the paperwork



could be used as a valuable teaching tool. Kim, for example, saw the value of maintaining her second nine weeks portfolio of student assessments because she was surprised at the students' progress.

Table 18

Teacher Development Stages: December-February

	Skill Acquisition	Reorientation of Concerns	Life Cycle
Tina	Novice/ Advanced Beginner	Preteaching/ Early Teaching	Induction
David	Advanced Beginner/ Competent	Early Teaching/ Late Teaching	Competency Building
Kim	Advanced Beginner	Early Teaching/ Late Teaching	Induction/ Competency Building

*Teacher Development: March-May*

In March, Tina was in the advanced beginner stage of development. She became aware of the similarities across the contexts of different subjects. For example, when the students talked about monocots and dicots in science, Tina integrated math in the lesson, getting them to see that a flower with a multiple of three would be a monocot. The students took this information, and began posing further analogies. Tina questioned her students about what else they would observe on the plant. During discussion, she challenged them to observe parallel lines and

branch lines to see if they intersected. This integration of cross discipline content demonstrated that Tina had moved from the novice stage of development to advanced beginner. Intensely involved in the learning process, one of the many activities that Tina pursued to improve her teaching was a weekend science class offered by the school system and a local university.

During April, Tina was observed twice by her principal. At the time of her monthly interview, Tina had not had a post observation conference with her principal. She thought things went well, but was still apprehensive, a characteristic typical of teachers in the early stage of teaching. However, Tina showed signs of making the transition into the late teaching stage of development. She was focused on her students' needs as she prepared them for the next grade by assessing their learning and reteaching those skills and concepts with which they were still struggling.

Tina also was making the transition to being a competent teacher. A competent teacher accepts responsibility for the instruction of her students. Tina's development of this characteristic was noticed by her principal, who had earlier observed its absence. The principal also had noted that Tina was student-oriented and able to individualize instruction.

David continued to show signs of developing as a competent teacher. He made conscious choices about instruction, set priorities, decided on a plan, and devised practical means for reaching goals. At the end of the school year, David had focused goals for his students in all subject areas. He knew what his students had to master by the end of the year, and he had a plan to make sure nothing would be left out. David also had identified

several weaknesses among the students, especially in math. For example, when he worked with students on a unit in area, David discovered that they did not know how to multiply with two digit numbers. Feeling that this should have been covered earlier in the year and not at the end of March, David did not like the pacing of the mathematics curriculum that the city originally had outlined. He felt that the textbook concepts were not presented in a logical manner. Showing concern for student achievement and a willingness to adapt the curriculum to achieve it, David demonstrated that he was a competent teacher. His comments about this experience were valuable to his teaching: ". . . it [the district's pacing chart] just doesn't make much sense. . . . next year I'm not going to follow it [the district guide] as closely. I will follow the book more and integrate more of the national standards."

David still fluctuated between the early teaching and late teaching stages of development, however, he demonstrated late teaching characteristics when he focused on his students' needs. He nevertheless, could not make the complete transition into that developmental stage because he still struggled with adequacy issues. This was clearly evident when David's end of the year evaluation caused him to question his position in the school. Until David believed that self evaluation was more important than personal gain or evaluations by others, he would not completely make the transition to the late teaching stage of development, a stage very difficult for first year teachers to attain.

David continued to build his competency by attending professional meetings and reading professional books. Knowing that his weakest teaching area was writing, David focused on how to improve student writing skills. He began to identify elements

missing in his instructional program and made plans to implement them. For example, he decided to have his students keep writing portfolios. David said, as he explained his decision, "I think the kids need to get a sense that their work is going to be valued and saved and I haven't done that with them." He set new priorities and decided on a plan to improve the writing of his students and to help him teach writing more effectively.

Developmentally, Kim also showed signs of moving from the advanced beginner to the competent stage. She accepted that it was her responsibility to provide instruction for her students. Her students were always her first priority; and the instructional program in Kim's room was evident up to the last week of school. Kim's classroom was centered around the needs of her students. She discovered a management system that worked, and did much of her instruction in small groups. Kim focused on student needs which is a characteristic of teachers who are in the late teaching stage of development. However, Kim was still concerned with her end-of-the-year evaluation. She thought she had learned a lot during her first year, but was still apprehensive about the final evaluation by her principal. Kim, therefore, was between the developmental stages of early and late teaching.

Kim, nevertheless, remained in the competency building stage of development. During her March interview, she was excited about a conference that she had recently attended and from which she was implementing several elements into her instructional program. Kim sought out new materials, methods and strategies to improve her teaching. Commenting on one of these techniques, Kim said "We do a lot of sight words in kindergarten so now everybody has a name tag that has a sight word on it. So instead of your name being Kiera

your new name is "She". You have to know what your new name is and you have to know how to spell it. If anyone wants to talk to you they have to know what your new name is and they have to read your name tag." Kim used every bit of time during her day to reinforce basic skills.

Table 19

Teacher Development Stages: March-May

	Skill Acquisition	Reorientation of Concerns	Life Cycle
Tina	Advanced Beginner/ Competent	Early Teaching/ Late Teaching	Competency Building
David	Competent	Early Teaching/ Late Teaching	Competency Building
Kim	Competent	Early Teaching/ Late Teaching	Competency Building

In each of the teacher development models explored there is an underlying philosophy about how to prepare teachers. An assumption of the skill development model is that, given all of the specific skills needed to teach, preservice teachers will be successful. In analyzing the teacher interviews it was noted that teachers transitioned into the next stage of development when they were successful in meeting a particular challenge in the classroom. If teachers were unable to resolve issues then they remained at the current teacher development stage. This study supports the findings of Piland (1992) who in her study of the developmental stages of elementary student teachers, found

movement within developmental stages occurred when questions were answered and the unknowns about teaching became familiar. Movement through stages becomes evident once student teachers begin to develop teaching skills and receive successful evaluations. However, just having the necessary teaching skills did not guarantee movement between stages as was with the case of Tina. Tina did not develop as much as the other two teachers in this study because of how she was impacted by outside influences. Tina was not able to remain focused on her students, instead she became frustrated by the system. This hindered her development. She was able to cycle out of her frustration, but no clear conclusions were able to be drawn from the ethnographic interviews to show what helped her to cycle out of her period of frustration.

It appears that the teachers in this study acquired the skills necessary to make an effective transition into their first year of urban teaching. However, the skill development model did not clarify that the characteristics needed to be present in all subject areas and the model's characteristics were broadly defined. Therefore, teachers who were weak in one subject area, such as teaching writing, still made the transition to the next level because they had the teacher characteristics in other subject areas. This study also showed that the first year urban teachers made the transition earlier than expected through the skill acquisition model. In fact, Berliner (1988) stated that teachers would reach the advanced beginner stage during their second or third year of teaching and would need three or four years to become competent. It appears that the first year teachers in this study had the necessary skills when they entered the classroom.

An assumption of the reorientation of concerns model is the irrelevance of the teacher education curriculum to the process of becoming a teacher. However, the teachers in this study were satisfied with the Professional Development School teacher preparation program. All of the teachers in this study gave their overall teacher preparation program a grade of A or B, and felt that they were prepared for their first year of urban teaching. In fact, the teachers moved quickly through the development stages, struggling only with adequacy issues when they were evaluated by their principals.

The life cycle approach revolves around teaching as a whole and observes how teachers change over time. All three of the teachers in this study made the transition to the competency stage of development. They worked assiduously to improve their teaching skills and abilities, and were receptive to new ideas. They also willingly attended conferences and workshops to improve their teaching skills. An assumption of the life cycle model is that teachers will transition in and out of developmental stages in response to outside influences. The participants in this study did not transition in and out of the developmental stages outlined in the model. However, when Tina experienced frustration with her principal, she began to show signs of moving into the career frustration cycle during the middle part of the year. The career frustration cycle is characterized by frustration and disillusionment with teaching, which cause educators to question why they are teaching. Only Tina's development was affected by outside influences. Further research needs to be done to observe if some teachers are more sensitive to outside influences in the classroom than others or if this is a character trait found in

some teachers.

The urban teachers in this study had their own ideas about what teachers needed in order to be successful. They felt that there was more to effective teaching than just learning skills: Tina felt that effective teachers need to be good at psychology because each student is different and teachers have to figure out what will work with each child. Tina did not believe that one approach would work with all students. Kim felt that a full academic year is required to understand all the demands made on a classroom teacher, and several more years to perfect the skills. Participants in this study also believed that a natural desire to teach and to interact with students were characteristics of effective urban teachers.

Analyzing the teacher interviews this study supports the views that in order to make a successful transition in the urban classroom teachers do need some specific skills. However, knowing isolated skills does not guarantee success. The teachers in this study were unanimous in attributing their success to their Professional Development School model for teacher preparation when mastering the practical aspects of the classroom. The first year teachers felt that placing preservice teachers in real settings equipped them to handle the challenges of their urban school environments. The urban first year teachers drew upon their experiences when setting up their classroom routines. The teachers were also successful in the classroom because they utilized their effective teaching characteristics. This study can not attribute the success of these three first year teachers to one attribute. It appears that their success was due to their teacher preparation program providing them with the necessary teaching skills, and



their effective teacher characteristics.

### *Teacher Efficacy*

Teacher efficacy was identified by using the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by Woolfolk & Hoy (1990). Woolfolk and Hoy found evidence to support two dimensions of teacher efficacy, teaching efficacy (TE) and personal efficacy (PE). In 1990, Woolfolk & Hoy sampled 182 prospective teachers. On a scale of one to six, the mean for their sample was 3.6 for teaching efficacy (SD=.7) and 4.2 for personal efficacy (SD=.6). In September the teaching efficacy for the first year teachers in this study, based on Woolfolk and Hoy's Teacher Efficacy Scale with a range of one to six, was 3.6 for teaching efficacy and 4.8 for personal efficacy. In May the mean score was 3.8 for teaching efficacy and 5.0 for personal efficacy (see Table 20). The sample in this study started and concluded with mean scores of average teaching efficacy and slightly high scores of personal efficacy as compared to the results found by Woolfolk & Hoy.

Table 20

### Teacher Efficacy Scales

Teacher	September		January		May	
	TE	PE	TE	PE	TE	PE
Tina	4.5	5.2	2.3	5.1	4.4	5.3
David	2.9	4.1	2.5	4.3	2.6	4.3
Kim	3.3	5.3	4.5	5.5	4.4	5.4

Note: TE = Teaching Efficacy, PE = Personal Efficacy

Differences became apparent when the first year teachers completed the Teacher Efficacy Scale in January. The teachers' personal efficacy scores remained reasonably stable; however, the teacher efficacy dimension showed shifts from September to January. Tina had the most drastic change. Her teacher efficacy score went from 4.5, declining to 2.3. David's teacher efficacy decreased only slightly while Kim's increased from 3.3 to 4.5. The interviews reflected this change as well. Personal and teacher efficacy scores did change slightly, but not enough to be significant. Although the literature indicated that teacher efficacy typically declines (Soodak & Podell, 1997) during the first year of teaching, participants in this study maintained their efficacy scores.

Tina's feeling of frustration may account for the decreased score. She grew frustrated with the climate of the building and felt that she was not being appreciated. Tina was upset that the administration ". . . felt that anybody could be in here teaching these kids right now." David still had some doubts about his teaching abilities as the year progressed. He was very critical of his first year of teaching, and he expressed it this way: "If I were to be evaluated seriously all day long I think they would come up with a lot of things that I could do to improve." However, because of positive feedback from parents and students, David's February interview reflected his renewed confidence. Kim, however, reacted differently. She felt successful because her students had mastered working in small groups, and Kim felt comfortable with the curriculum. This confidence was reflected in higher self efficacy scores.

When the Teacher Efficacy Scale was given again in May, Tina's teaching efficacy score was 4.4, almost the same as when the school year began. Tina's decline midyear did not continue. David's teaching efficacy also increased. Kim's final teaching efficacy score dipped slightly from midyear, but was higher than at the beginning of the school year. The personal efficacy scores of all first year teachers remained fairly constant throughout the school year. Overall, the fluctuations of the self efficacy measures occurred in the teaching efficacy dimension.

Teaching efficacy is a belief that teaching can overcome the effects of outside influences in students. Tina and David began the year feeling optimistic about the influences of their teaching in the lives of their students. However when they began their first year of teaching they were faced with the realities of teaching fourth graders who did not like to study for tests, may not have had someone at home helping them with homework, and at times would rather be playing than reviewing their class work. Tina and David were not prepared for the amount of motivation required to encourage students to complete school work. Tina did not struggle to get her students motivated in learning. This may have been in part due to the ages of her students. Tina taught kindergarten and the students wanted to learn even if no one was home to help them or there were other outside distractions.

Of all of the first year teachers, Tina's midyear responses reflected the greatest amount of change. Her feelings about teaching shifted during that time from being positive about her job to questioning her willingness to continue to work in the same school next year. One source of her change in attitude was her perception of inconsistency from her principal. However Tina felt

that her confidence had been fairly consistent, but her willingness to take responsibility for her students' failures was not the same. At the beginning of the year Tina felt that she was responsible for educating her students, but by the end of the year Tina felt that the responsibilities of teaching and learning should be shared with her students and their parents. David also came to the conclusion that students needed to take some responsibility for their successes and failures, commenting that "There comes a time where students do have to study for tests and complete their homework. A teacher or parent cannot do everything for them." These attitudes were reflected in the teaching efficacy scores. Although teaching efficacy scores changed midyear, they concluded with average teaching efficacy. The teachers in this study still believed that effective teaching can overcome the negative influences impacting urban students.

The personal efficacy scores of the first year teachers in this study were slightly higher as compared to the 1990 study by Woolfolk & Hoy. Personal efficacy is the belief that one can affect change in students. The teachers in this study felt that they could affect change in their students. In general, their scores became slightly stronger as the year progressed. Towards the end of the year, the first year teachers were asked if their confidence had changed over the year. David and Kim felt that their confidence had increased. David felt that he went through a period of professional self examination and reflection which resulted in his feeling more confidence in what he was doing. At the beginning of the year, Kim felt that everything was disorganized. She tried to get organized, but other professionals hampered her efforts. She explained: "There are other

instructional leaders in the school and in the school system. They will tell you to do this, and, oh, I forgot to tell you that you need to do this. At the beginning of the year it was like they were beating me down with all of this stuff and I am just trying to get my class going." Kim felt more in control of her classroom toward the end of the year. These negative beliefs were reflected in the personal efficacy scores of the first year teachers.

### *Principal Interviews*

The urban principals interviewed for this study ranged in experience from seven to fifteen years, and had worked with fifteen to fifty first year teachers. One principal was a white male, another a black female, and the other a white female. The principals reported that all first year teachers in this study compared favorably to other first year teachers with whom they had worked. Comments gleaned from the principal interviews were as follows: "Kim has such confidence in her abilities; and it really comes through in her work. And if you ever get the chance to observe her you would never, ever think she was really a first year teacher." "Tina is a good, average teacher, but I think she has a higher potential, and I think with only a little more experience she will get there." "David does not appear to be a first year teacher. You would not know that you were walking into a first year teacher's class."

When asked to cite the characteristics indicative of the first year teachers' professionalism, the principals identified the following: being a good listener, trying hard, a willingness to take on additional duties, willingness to make contributions, being energetic, showing initiative, showing persistence, engaging in reflective practices, and demonstrating knowledge about what is

going on in the school. Principals reported that these teachers were strong in their delivery of instruction and had good classroom management skills. Most principals mentioned that the teachers in this study had good interpersonal skills, worked well with staff and students, and demonstrated a caring attitude with students and parents. Principals also added that mentors and a supportive faculty contributed to the first year teachers' strong performance.

Most first year teachers accepted leadership roles during their first year. Kim was asked to help evaluate programs for urban students that could be implemented at her school. During his first year, David did not accept any major leadership roles in the school; but next year he was going to be appointed to work with the design technology program. Tina became an instructional leader in science, requiring her to provide inservices for other teachers and to coordinate the school science fair.

Only one principal in this study worked in a Professional Development School setting. He felt that students who had been through the Professional Development School were more in tune with student learning needs. He added, "I don't need to spend as much time with them. I don't need to do as much mentoring kinds of activities. It is much easier for me to give them more freedom and flexibility and I don't have to do as much monitoring of instruction."

Principals were questioned about the strengths and weaknesses of the first year teachers in this study. The teachers trained in a Professional School setting showed abilities for teaching which included effective instructional practices, effective discipline, and effective working relationships with the community. One

principal commented that David's classroom management and his relationships with the kids and their parents had improved much faster than other first year teachers. As a principal in a Professional Development School, he believed teachers who had not been through Professional Development School training did not seem to know how to relate as effectively with parents and how to deal with classroom management issues. Only one principal reported a specific area of weakness in her first year teacher and that was related to curriculum planning.

Principals had a variety of responses to the question: "What would help other future teachers to adjust and to develop in order to become effective urban teachers?" Repeated most often was providing more in-school experience earlier in teacher training and having that practice include "hands-on" teaching and classroom experiences. The principal familiar with Professional Development Schools felt that the Professional Development School program should be expanded, but lamented the lack of funding and resources. He also stated that student teaching should be longer. One principal mentioned that during their first year of teaching new teachers should be supported by a joint university-school system program that offers guidance, assistance, and supervision.

### *Effective Urban Teacher Characteristics*

Haberman (1995) identifies fifteen effective teacher characteristics. Only ten of the characteristics are measurable on his Urban Teacher Selection Interview. The other five teacher characteristics must be observed in the teachers themselves. The three teachers in this study, as measured by Haberman, did not have all the effective teacher characteristics. However, analyzing

monthly ethnographic interviews and receiving additional information from principals, all of three of the teachers in this study modeled effective teacher characteristics. Each effective urban characteristic is explored in the following section with examples from the teachers in this study gleaned from ethnographic interviews.

The first year teachers were selected for this study because they showed many of the characteristics of effective urban teachers recognized by Haberman. Kim stated, "I'd like to think that I am a good teacher, but I don't know that it is because I am smarter than anyone, or that I learned anymore than anyone else. I just love the kids and I believe that they can do it." This statement is an example of one characteristic of effective urban teachers and the ideology that influences their behavior. The characteristics of effective urban teachers exhibited by the teachers in this study supported their transition to their first year of teaching. When difficulties occurred in the classroom, these teachers drew on these qualities to meet classroom challenges.

Haberman (1995) linked persistence to teacher commitment and effort. Accordingly, successful urban teachers believe that it is their responsibility to find a way to engage all students in the learning process. Because they believe that there is potential in each student, effective urban teachers strive to meet the needs of all students, and to engage them in the learning process. Tina began the year trying to instill self confidence in her students. David worked hard to differentiate his instruction so that students at different levels could have their instructional needs met. Kim's motto in her classroom was "just try". The students



understood that they did not have to be perfect, but that all of them were expected to try.

Effective urban teachers protect student learning by being sensitive to events that might capture the imagination of students. David provided many examples of how he protected students' learning by searching constantly for creative, innovative, and authentic approaches to involve them. This characteristic was praised by his principal. David, having traveled and having had various other life experiences outside of college, continually used these in his instructional program. The principal made this observation about David's dynamic methods: "I was in there one day, and it was a basic lesson but David went off on this sub historical topic, and it was information I did not even know. The kids were mesmerized by it....He brings a sense of reality to history. I guess it is really storytelling." Tina also exhibited this effective urban teacher characteristic when she provided authentic approaches involving all of her students in a science fair. She ran the school science fair in a way that allowed students to conduct experiments and to be creative. At the beginning of the year, Kim struggled to protect her students' learning time, in spite of all the required testing. After her first few months, however, she devised a system that incorporated assessments into her instructional program.

Effective urban teachers are able to actively involve children in the learning process (Haberman, 1995). David integrated novel studies into his existing curriculum, and found that the students were much more involved in the learning process. Kim put her students in charge of circle time every morning, forcing them to review concepts that had already been taught.

Effective urban teachers are able to put new instructional ideas into practice. For example, Tina's principal noted that Tina was able to utilize recently learned ideas and concepts in her instructional program. Likewise, Kim and David learned new methods and strategies from workshops and implemented them in their instructional programs.

The approach to at risk students is also different for effective urban teachers. They believe it is their responsibility to teach all students. David stayed after school to tutor several students when they were having difficulty learning fractions. He committed himself to helping these students because they did not have anyone at home to review the concepts with them. Toward the end of the year, Tina struggled with the issue of whose responsibility it is to teach students. She eventually concluded that responsibility for learning must be shared, and that she could not accomplish it alone. She explained: ". . . At some point you just have to realize that the students and parents are going to have to take some responsibility for their behavior . . . "

Effective urban teachers also find ways to prove that their students can be taught, and they strive to make teaching relevant. Concerned that her students were not working up to their ability, Kim commented: "It's hard on some of them because several of them are just quiet and even when you are testing them one-on-one they are so shy, or nervous, or afraid to be wrong that they won't answer you at all." Kim began assessing her students as they played bingo-type games so that the students would feel comfortable. She found that, when the pressure to perform was diminished, students were more successful. Over time, Kim stated during her interviews, the students gained confidence and became

better test takers. David analyzed the test results of his class to identify misunderstood concepts, poorly written questions, and lack of student effort. After testing David would often gather students into small groups to analyze the test results. Tina provided pre-test review sessions and study guides for her students. She found these study guides to be helpful to students and parents.

Successful urban teachers develop relationships with students based on caring, respect, and trust. Haberman identifies this as a professional-personal orientation to students. Kim found this orientation to be extremely helpful when working with her students, and tried to build it into the climate of the classroom. However, as a consequence of a particular experience, Kim became aware of how this approach could affect both her and her students. One morning a student came up to her and whispered that she got a "beating" last night. This statement has many different meanings for urban children, so after a discussion, she realized that the issue required the assistance of social services. Tina also had a student in her class, Michael (a pseudonym), who was not a very social child. His mother's greatest concern the first part of the year was how he was adjusting. He was diagnosed with dyslexia, and he began fourth grade on a first grade, seventh month reading level. Knowing that Michael loved history, Tina began, when possible, to incorporate his interests and expertise into her lessons. Over the year, Michael's mother commented that Michael had begun being more social with others, telling jokes, was becoming more interested in what other kids were doing, and was acting more like a kid. The other students in the class noticed Micheal's love for history, and took their history questions to

him. This confidence and respect from others gave Michael a feeling of success that he had not previously known. By the end of the year, he was reading at the third grade sixth month level, and was on the honor roll. David was upset when he learned that his worst-behaved student was leaving in December. David commented on his disappointment in this manner: "I would like to see him finish up the year here. I want the best for him even though it would be the hardest thing for me to keep him here." Effective urban teachers continue to care for and respect all students, even those who create trouble in their classrooms.

How teachers handle the school bureaucracy makes a difference. Successful urban teachers are able to adjust and cope in ways that enable them to achieve success without becoming overwhelmed (Haberman, 1995). Tina found that the amount of required paperwork tended to "get you sidetracked." David tried to become organized by correlating the specific standards of learning with some of the paperwork, homework, classwork, and tests. Kim also found a way to manage the bureaucracy in her school: "There are specific things that I want for myself and a certain routine that I want for me as well as for the kids. If someone gives me something from the office, then I have a time line on myself that I am not going to have it for more than two days." Kim felt that during her first year of teaching she had learned how to manage her time and the varied tasks required of a teacher.

When teachers are able to recognize and take responsibility for their own personal and professional mistakes they possess the characteristic that Haberman identified as fallibility. A good example of this occurred when David was trying to teach descriptive writing. He wanted his students to think of a place

that they knew well, web it out using the five senses and write a descriptive paragraph. He observed, initially: "It did not go well at all. The kids wanted to write a travel brochure. . . and they were getting frustrated. Finally I collected all the papers in a huff. I said 'this is really not working', and all the kids were really afraid that they were going to get an F and I said, 'no, it just didn't work'." Tina would often remind her students after teaching a new concept to ask questions if they did not understand. Tina told her students, ". . . even the littlest thing you don't understand I may not have explained it well, and I will try to explain it in another way to you." When Kim recognized her own mistakes, she would try something else. Kim found that if she were not flexible or not willing to try new ideas, then she could become quickly frustrated when students did not grasp new skills.

Effective urban teachers have both emotional and physical stamina and are able to capture the attention of the students. When the principals of the schools discussed the strengths of the first year teachers in this study, they observed that the teachers were energetic, creative, and innovative. Successful teachers have extraordinary organizational and managerial skills. The teachers in this study were very aware that they could not function efficiently in the classroom without organizational skills; they all commented that their organizational skills helped them cope in the classroom. For example, Kim was able to conduct reading groups and assessments at the same time. David was able to individualize instruction because he was able to track the specific standards of learning skills that students had not yet mastered. Tina organized the classroom space so that materials and equipment were readily available for various student activities. All of the teachers in

this study consistently demonstrated the organizational and managerial skills necessary to be successful teachers.

Effective urban teachers instill the idea in their students that success is achieved by effort and hard work, not by ability alone. Teachers demonstrate this by recognizing and fostering the efforts made by their students. At the beginning of the school year, each teacher in this study sought to create an attitude of success. Tina concentrated on the strengths of each student and emphasized that if they all worked together that they would grow stronger. She instilled the idea that if they stopped helping each other and working together they would not succeed. Kim's motto in her class was "just try". She expected all students to try, and that the habit of trying to do their best would lead to success. David also fostered the belief that when students worked hard they would achieve. David noticed that sometimes other issues needed to be addressed before a student was ready to learn. One of his students, for example, became frustrated when having difficulty with his multiplication and division facts. David learned that there was no one at home to review with the student, and no money to purchase flash cards. David and the student made a set of flash cards and laminated them for durability. David realized that occasionally the teacher has to make the extra effort to review and reteach material that students should already know.

Effective urban teachers believe students will succeed if given encouragement and provided with authentic learning opportunities. The teachers in this study sought to fulfill these conditions. They worked hard to design authentic learning experiences through experiments, field trips, and readings that connected to their students' lives. Effective urban teachers are

focused on real teaching. They used a variety of approaches to review and reteach concepts to make sure all the students grasped the material. Tina planned a trip to Jamestown so that the content of the fourth grade social studies curriculum would come alive for the students. Tina stated, ". . . there was an actual settlement, boats, and an Indian village. It was really neat." David likewise found himself adapting lessons to fit his students' needs. He noticed that the textbook was targeted towards students in the Midwest so ". . .they don't work here." David tailored the lessons to fit the sophistication level of his students. Kim provided an authentic learning opportunity when she incorporated several units about differences in people, places, transportation, and technology. Her students metaphorically "traveled" to every continent to explore other cultures, and customs, and to locate the various countries on a map. The students also visited several web sites that showed pictures of children from the various countries. Kim's students enjoyed other authentic activities as well, such as making passports, suitcases and souvenirs.

The students of these effective urban teachers felt that they were needed and wanted in the classroom. This perception was communicated in a variety of ways. Tina had several students with advanced computer skills. Whenever computer problems arose in her classroom she could count on them to set things right. Kim's opening to the school day was conducted entirely by her kindergarten students who led oral and visual reviews of past material. The job of leading the reviews rotated throughout the year so that all students regularly participated. Students appeared to look forward to coming to school because they were rarely absent.

Effective urban teachers develop rapport with students through team building and problem solving (Haberman, 1995). David demonstrated this rapport during his first month of teaching. With regard to discipline, he found that the students needed more structure than he was using. He discussed the problem with his students who offered suggestions for discipline plans that worked for them. Together, students and teacher produced a plan that worked successfully for all. Towards the end of the year, Tina's students were motivated and encouraged by how well they were doing. When the students had a test, it was the goal of the class to make sure there would be no E's, the lowest grade possible. The students worked together to help each other. Kim also noticed that some teachers in her building became frustrated when students were not learning. In Kim's opinion, the first thing teachers did was to refer the student for evaluation to see if he or she would qualify for special education services. Kim, unlike her fellow teachers, felt that special education was not the first response to help students with learning problems. In fact, she said; "The reality is they probably have a different learning style, and together we have to find a way to meet their needs."

Students in urban schools are aware of the violence around them. Furthermore, effective urban teachers have high expectations for their students, believe in them, and nurture them to develop into self-disciplined learners in spite of their preoccupation with violence. During her first year of teaching, Tina realized that many parents were unwilling or unable to provide for all the needs of their children. Many of her students came to school without breakfast, without winter coats, and seemingly without anyone who cared about their behavior or grades. Tina wanted her



students to know that there was someone who cared about them. For Tina the difficulties surfaced in conflicts between behavior acceptable at home but unacceptable at school. Tina nurtured her students to have high expectations for themselves and to discipline themselves. She encouraged them to cultivate high expectations by watching their peers succeed. By constantly praising her students for their accomplishments, Kim helped her students feel more confident. She observed: "Once they have the confidence then they are always going to be willing to try." David likewise developed relationships with students by selecting novel studies carefully that would address their needs. The novel studies created a climate for discussing sensitive issues with his students. David who had several students from racially mixed families, felt that he could contribute to a stimulating dialogue about racial issues. The school where they attended was formerly an all-white school. Students were amazed to discover that until the mid-sixties several of today's students would not have been allowed entrance. This awareness created the climate for a great discussion, giving students a forum for addressing racial issues important to them.

The three first year teachers involved in this study utilized effective teacher characteristics identified by Haberman. The teachers relied on these characteristics to cope and adjust throughout the year. Analyzing the ethnographic interviews of the teachers, the first year teachers utilized the effective teacher characteristic of persistence most often when struggling with issues in the classroom. When problems occurred teachers would try other methods and procedures to meet classroom needs. According to Haberman this quality can not be taught in a teacher preparation

program, though it can be modeled. These teachers seemed to be more aware when an approach was not working in the classroom. This predisposition to being flexible and to try different approaches to meet the needs of urban students may have facilitated a more rapid adjustment to the classroom and to more advanced stages of development. This interpretation is speculative and further research would be needed to verify the analysis.

This study followed teachers from a previous study on Professional Development Schools who completed the Urban Teacher Selection Interview as student interns the semester before student teaching, and again after completing their student teaching assignment. They were selected for this study because they scored high on Haberman's (1996) Urban Teacher Selection Interview. The Urban Teacher Selection Interview was then given a third time at the end of the teacher's first year of teaching. Monthly interviews revealed that all three teachers showed effective teacher characteristics throughout their first year. Table 21 shows how the first year teachers scored over time on individual effective urban teacher characteristics.

Table 21

## Urban Teacher Selection Interview

Teacher	Student Intern	Student Teaching	First Year Teaching
Tina			
Persistence	High	High	Average
Values Student Learning	High	High	High
Theory to Practice	High	High	High
Work With At-Risk Students	Average	Low	Low
Approach to Students	Average	High	Low
Survive in Bureaucracy	Average	Average	Average
Admit Mistakes	Low	Average	High
Explanation of Teacher Success	High	Average	High
Explication of Student Success	Low	Average	Average
Planning and Organization	Low	High	Low
David			
Persistence	High	High	High
Values Student Learning	High	High	High
Theory to Practice	High	High	High
Work With At-Risk Students	Average	Low	Low
Approach to Students	High	High	High
Survive in Bureaucracy	Average	Average	Average
Admit Mistakes	Average	Average	High
Explanation of Teacher Success	High	Average	High
Explication of Student Success	Average	Low	Average
Planning and Organization	Low	Low	Low

Kim

Persistence	High	High	High
Values Student Learning	High	High	High
Theory to Practice	High	High	High
Work With At-Risk Students	Average	Average	Low
Approach to Students	High	High	Average
Survive in Bureaucracy	High	Average	High
Admit Mistakes	Average	Low	Average
Explanation of Teacher Success	High	High	High
Explication of Student Success	Average	Low	Average
Planning and Organization	Average	Average	Average

Haberman (1995) states that teacher's scores on the Urban Teacher Interview should be stable over time. Table 21 shows that for over two years the effective urban teacher characteristics remained relatively stable. All three of the first year teachers in this study scored low when working with at risk students. However, Haberman (1995) identifies two major components of the teacher characteristics relevant to working with at risk students which may explain part of this disparity. First, Haberman states that effective urban teachers constantly seek teaching strategies, techniques, and activities to meet the needs of students. Second, these teachers take responsibility for student learning when they are working with at risk students. Even though the first year teachers in this study struggled with their responsibility for student learning, they all felt that, at some point, the students needed to share that responsibility.

Assessing an effective urban teacher characteristic with the following components made it difficult to distinguish where first

year teachers scored low: seeking strategies that meet the needs of first year teachers or accepting responsibility for student learning. The monthly ethnographic interviews of the first year teachers definitely suggested that these teachers were effective in seeking and using strategies, techniques, and activities to meet the needs of their students. However, they were not willing to accept full responsibility for student learning. These teachers felt that the students and parents needed to take some responsibility for learning by completing homework and reviewing material for tests.

Two of the teachers in this study also scored low on planning and organizing the classroom. This contradicts earlier demonstrated performance noted by principals and described during monthly ethnographic interviews. This discrepancy between an assessment instrument and documentation by principal interviews and ethnographic interviews of the first year teachers can not be explained in this study. In contrast, all scored high on the effective teacher characteristics of valuing student learning, relating theory to practice, and explaining teacher success. These results were not inconsistent with a previous study conducted by McKinney (2000), comparing student teachers who were not involved in a Professional Development School experience to those student interns who were placed in urban Professional Development Schools. The student interns in the Professional Development School felt better prepared than their counterparts in the traditional program to teach in an urban setting. McKinney found that when characteristics were combined the Professional Development Schools were significant to a student teachers' collaboration skills, professional commitment, and reflective practices. These

characteristics remained strong throughout their first year in urban schools. The three first year teachers in this study, as with McKinney's research, collaborated with other teachers, were committed to teaching in urban schools, and were consistently involved in reflective practices. Further, McKinney also found that all student teachers and interns displayed difficulty when working with at risk students. All of the teachers in this study had some difficulty with at risk students, but reported that they had a good first year urban teaching experience.

#### *Commitment to Urban Teaching*

The Professional Development Schools is one program being utilized for preparing teachers who are qualified and willing to teach in urban schools. The three teachers in this study felt that they had the necessary skills and were qualified to teach urban students. Tina wanted to teach in an urban school because she felt everyone was working towards one goal; to give students a good education so that they can better themselves. She saw these beliefs modeled in her Professional Development School experience. Tina likewise wanted her students to know that somebody cared for them and wanted to help improve their lives. As the year progressed, Tina realized that making a big impact on her students was more difficult than she realized. However, this realization did not change Tina's belief that she could make a difference in an urban school. Although she remained committed to working in an urban setting, she did consider transferring to another urban school to work with a principal who she felt better understood the needs of urban students.

David's commitment to teaching in urban schools, like Tina's, also remained strong. David was attracted to the urban setting

because of its diversity. He was energized by the racial, ethnic, and economic differences that urban students brought to the classroom. Unlike Tina, he never considered leaving to teach elsewhere.

Because she had always been influenced positively by teachers, Kim thought that as a teacher she too could make a difference. She wanted to teach in an urban setting because she thought ". . . there might be kids who need me. I thought if I could really help those children who weren't getting help from other places, it would be more meaningful." Kim's commitment to providing the higher quality instruction for urban students remained strong. Struggling with a school program that she believed was not set up in the best interests of its urban students, Kim worked hard all year to meet the curriculum demands of a half-day program. She remained convinced, however, that a whole day program would better serve the needs of the students. At the end of the school year, Kim left her position to teach in a neighboring urban school district that offered a whole day kindergarten program.

Morris and Nunnery (1994) found that ninety percent of preservice teachers who had participated in a Professional Development School would choose to teach in an urban setting. Not only did the three teachers in this study teach in an urban setting, but they wanted to continue teaching in an urban setting for many years.

### *Summary*

The first year teachers in this study did not have the concerns, recorded in the literature, with discipline, maintaining classroom control, dealing with individual differences, and

dealing with insufficient teaching materials or supplies. They did reflect several concerns stated in the literature such as working with parents and teaching certain subject areas. One critical difference between first year teachers in this study and those described in the literature is the concern about special education issues. Teachers in this study were not prepared for the challenges they would face concerning the special needs of children, especially in an inclusion classroom setting.

To meet the challenges of teaching in an urban setting, the three teachers in this study used a combination of resources ranging from collaboration with experienced teachers, workshops, inservices, critical reflection and self assessment. Their efforts at self improvement enhanced their planning, organizational, and instructional skills, promoted flexibility, and created an openness to new approaches and strategies. The first year teachers coped with these challenges by utilizing district resources, outside resources, and personal characteristics. All three first year teachers had access to curriculum guides that helped them throughout their first year. They also drew upon the experience of other coworkers. However as the year went on two teachers began to rely increasingly on themselves to cope with the challenges of their first year while one teacher interacted more with colleagues. All three of the first year teachers relied on workshops and inservices, the internet, and other outside resources to improve their teaching. At some point during the year all three of the first year teachers drew upon their teacher training to cope with challenges in the urban classroom. They relied heavily on the personal characteristics of being organized and flexible in the classroom.



Professional collaboration modeled in their Professional Development School settings provided the foundation on which the three new teachers in this study built partnerships to meet the challenges of their first year as teachers. The three teachers relied on their effective teaching characteristics to make a successful transition into the urban classroom. Although these first year teachers thought the Professional Development School preparation program adequately prepared them for their first year of teaching, the majority felt that they could have been better prepared to teach communications skills, especially writing. The principal evaluations suggested a connection between the preparation offered by the Professional Development Schools and the quality of first year teacher performance. This connection was supported by principal evaluations of first year teachers, their successful transition through the developmental stages of teaching, and their professional responses in teacher interviews.

The three first year teachers who demonstrated effective urban teacher characteristics identified by Haberman, and who had been part of a Professional Development School teacher preparation program changed and progressed throughout their first year of teaching. They adjusted successfully to their urban classrooms and progressed more rapidly through the developmental stages of teaching than teachers described in the literature. The first year teachers coped not only with personal issues and concerns of adjustment, but also with the professional issues common to teachers who seek to increase student achievement. The first year teachers in this study appeared to transition into the next teacher developmental stage after successfully meeting challenges in the classroom. The first year teachers would struggle with a

concept, focus on resolving the issue, and after meeting the challenge, progress to the next stage of teacher development. If the issue was not resolved they remained at their current teacher development stage.

All first year teachers scored low on Haberman's Urban Teacher Selection Interview (Haberman, 1996) in the area of working with at risk students. The subjects' effective urban teacher characteristics were relatively stable over time. Although there were fluctuations over time, the self efficacy of first year urban teachers, in both teaching and personal efficacy, remained stable. All of the first year teachers remained committed to teaching students in urban schools, however, the first year teachers did not necessarily stay in their same school or urban school district. The first year teachers valued urban principals who were flexible and willing to try new ideas to meet the challenges of urban education.

## CHAPTER V

## Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes, discusses, and interprets the findings from this study. The chapter concludes with recommendations for policy, practice, and further investigation.

*Summary of the Study*

This year long qualitative study focused on three potentially effective first year teachers. The strength of this study was the usefulness in developing a greater understanding of the transition these three urban teachers face and the potential factors effecting their transitions. Several areas were highlighted for further study. This study was limited to three teachers therefore no generalizations can be made from this study. Areas of additional support to first year teachers were addressed which would be beneficial to making a successful transition into an urban environment. No causal relationships could be made due to the design of the study and to the purposeful selection process of the subjects.

This study found that the three first year teachers adjusted successfully to their urban classrooms. The three first year teachers in this study progressed more rapidly through the developmental stages of teaching than teachers identified in previous studies. The clearest indication of their successful adjustment was the speed with which they resolved personal issues about adequacy and role definition and focused on techniques, methods, and strategies they could use to improve the achievement of their students. The three first year teachers attributed their

success to being trained in a Professional Development School program and utilizing their effective teacher characteristics. Professional Development School programs nurture effective teaching characteristics which prepare teachers for urban environments.

The monthly interviews revealed that all three teachers were using effective strategies and methods for instruction. All teachers in this study worked hard to make the curriculum relevant to their students' lives and were increasingly successful as the year progressed. Feeling that it was their responsibility to turn their students into eager learners, all three teachers persevered even when they encountered obstacles or a lack of support. Their commitment to educating urban students sustained them through these challenges, and increased their determination to make a difference with the students. The first year teachers were able to quickly move into higher stages of development changing their focus from themselves to their students. This shift of focus was due in part to the relevance of their preparation program training in how to handle typical first year challenges, and their effective teacher characteristics of persistence and professional-personal orientation towards students.

The Urban Teacher Selection Interview showed that their Professional Development School program, although an excellent training ground for new teachers, could be improved by introducing more strategies for working with at risk students. Haberman states when teachers are asked to suggest what might be done to reduce the number of at risk students, most teachers recommended action to remedy poverty, violence, handicapping conditions, racism, unemployment, poor housing, drugs, lack of health care, gangs, and

dysfunctional families (Haberman,1995). Effective urban teachers cite issues related directly to education such as irrelevant school curricula, overly bureaucratic school systems, and poor teaching as causes for poor performance that are within the school system's power to control. Effective urban teachers, feeling that they have a primary responsibility for stimulating student enthusiasm for learning, focus more on relevant curriculum and more effective teaching strategies. Clearly, if urban teachers are going to be successful in their first experience, districts and preparation schools will have to prepare them for the challenges of educating at risk learners. This study highlighted some concerns of first year teachers.

Feistritzer (1990) found that preparation programs least prepare teachers in the areas of recognizing student learning styles, handling classroom management/discipline, and working effectively within the school organization. However, the three teachers in this study did not have difficulty in any of these areas. They did however have difficulty with the learning styles of at risk students. The three first year teachers in this study thought their Professional Development School preparation program adequately prepared them to recognize student learning styles, to understand child development, to work effectively within the school organization, to organize instruction, and to handle classroom management/discipline. Two of the three first year teachers in this study felt deficient in their ability to teach writing, to handle assessment, to deal with parents, to meet the challenges of special education settings, and to help students retain information. The teachers needed more experiences in these areas.

Working cooperatively with parents is a challenge for many first year teachers (Veenman, 1984). Specifically Veenman found that beginning teachers complained about the inadequate preparation to establish and maintain proper relationships with the students' parents. Parents were difficult to contact and often did not support the teachers ideas and interventions for their children. Consistent with Veenman's findings, the three first year teachers in this study wanted more experience in the preparation program to observe how experienced teachers worked with parents. They also would have liked to have participated in more parent teacher conferences to observe how teachers solve typical problems and interact with a variety of parents.

Although classroom discipline is the most serious problem faced by beginning teachers (Veenman, 1984), all principals felt that the three first year teachers had good classroom control. These teachers, faced with problems of discipline, simply solved discipline issues on their own. The three teachers all felt that their preparation program prepared them well for the discipline issues that they faced in the classroom. One teacher modified his discipline program after a few weeks. The changes achieved positive results and no major difficulties surfaced. Another teacher commented that the principles of the Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline (Freiberg, 1999) program which she had learned in the Professional Development School, helped her make a successful transition into her own classroom. She noticed that the program provided structure for the students and helped them become more successful. Another teacher used a modified version of the Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline program with her kindergarten students. Each of the

first year teachers found a discipline program that provided the order and consistency they saw modeled in their Professional Development School program.

Because the Professional Development School modeled professionals working cooperatively, the three first year teachers in this study were surprised to discover that not all school faculty performed in this manner. The three teachers expected that they and their colleagues would work together throughout the school year. They also were surprised at the lack of attention given to them by their principal, especially in the first few months of school. Based on their preparation program, the three teachers expected to be observed during the first few months of school; none of them was formally observed, or received feedback on their work, until much later in the school year. The absence of a support network forced these first year teachers to reflect on the quality of their own teaching and to seek out workshops and inservices that would help them address the needs of their students. These noncollaborative school environments, as compared to their Professional Development School experiences, forced the teachers to be very flexible and to try new things in their classrooms. This flexible improvisation became a common first year motif among the teachers. When a lesson did not work, they sought other ways to teach the concepts. Essentially, this uncollaborative environment may have made them more independent and resourceful as teachers. This idea would need to be explored in further research.

Although Soodak & Podell (1997) found that teacher's personal efficacy fell dramatically during the first years of teaching and then increased somewhat with experience, they noted that

"Clearly, the most striking and important finding of this present study is the degree to which elementary level teachers lose confidence in their ability to effect change in their students once they begin their teaching careers" (p. 219). This however was not the case with the three elementary teachers in this study. The Teacher Efficacy Scale measurement utilized in the Soodak and Podell study and in this research suggests that this decline is due to the fact that some teacher education programs are not preparing preservice teachers for the challenges they will face in the first years as teachers. However, the three first year teachers in this study felt that the Professional Development School more than adequately prepared them for the challenges of urban teaching.

Runyan (1990) stated in his research that the concerns of first year teachers are not always associated with actual instruction. Many first year teacher concerns involve non teaching duties, administrative responsibilities, human relation skills, and job perception difficulties. Although, Runyan believed that it is imperative that schools meet the personal and professional needs of first year teachers, the teachers in this study, by the end of the year, all focused on perfecting instruction and meeting the needs of their students. Unlike Runyan's subjects, it appears that although the potentially effective teachers in this study began the year with concerns about non teaching duties, administrative responsibilities, human relations and job perception difficulties, these concerns did not last all year, nor did they dominate their thinking. By year's end, the focus of the first year teachers changed to meeting their students' needs and making instruction more effective.



The first year teachers did not have concerns about handling classroom discipline, motivating students, dealing with individual differences, teaching materials and supplies, knowing the curriculum, and knowing what to teach. Their concerns were consistent with those of other teachers reflected in the literature: dealing with parents, the organization, teaching the subject, improving their teaching skills, and grading.

Urban teachers in this study differed in their concerns about special education issues. Their concerns were not reflected in the literature. Specifically, the three teachers complained that they had not been prepared to teach in an inclusion classroom setting, or to deal with the challenges presented by inclusion, especially at the beginning of a new school year. Although this concern did not remain for the entire year, the teachers nevertheless found it problematic. They networked with other teachers to make the necessary accommodations. As a result, the first year teachers quickly became familiar with their districts' special education procedures and policies.

All three of the teachers relied on their effective teacher characteristics to make a smooth transition into the urban classroom. They also used other available resources such as their coworkers, workshops, and inservices to assist them in becoming effective urban teachers. The environment in which these teachers worked forced them to be organized, flexible, and independent as they identified and employed a variety of innovative approaches to improve student learning. As these three first year teachers adjusted their strategies to meet the needs of their students, they used a variety of methods. Their willingness to use new techniques and their flexibility in the classroom also constitutes

a common pattern among these three first year teachers. Chester (1992) followed teachers in urban schools during their first year of teaching. He found new teachers were helped significantly by schools that promote opportunities for collaboration and encourage administrators' attention to the instructional performance of new teachers.

A primary challenge of school districts is to identify and attract teachers who work effectively in urban schools. Only 18% of undergraduate students preparing to be teachers consider teaching in an urban school setting (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1989), and the highest attrition rates occur in urban districts (Adams & Dial, 1993). In response to the lack of teachers willing to teach in urban schools, many urban school districts and universities have formed Professional Development Schools partnerships to address this challenge. The teachers in this study, prepared through a Professional Development School preparation program, were willing and committed to teaching in urban schools. This dedication to teach in urban schools remained constant for all three teachers who participated in this study. All three seemed willing to spend the rest of their teaching careers working with students in urban districts. Their desire to work in urban settings contrasts with the 1990 survey, Profile of Teachers in the U.S., in which only 33% of teachers who went through alternate teacher preparation programs, and only 12% of teachers who went through traditional student teaching programs, were willing to teach in an urban district. Berliner (2001) stated that Professional Development Schools have been one of the most promising reforms for teacher education in the last ten years.

### *Conclusions Drawn from the Study*

This study followed three first year teachers. Because of having only three subjects in the study, the results found can not be utilized in making policy and practice generalizations. The findings can contribute to identifying areas of further study because of its relatively unique focus on the first year transition of Professional Development School graduates into the urban classroom. The participants in this study, selected because they scored well on Haberman's Urban Teacher Selection Interview, were likely to be successful urban teachers. However, none of the subjects had all of the effective urban teacher characteristics. Therefore, their success in the classroom was not guaranteed. While, their success as first year teachers can be partially attributed to their effective urban teacher characteristics, their teacher preparation program influenced their professionalism. However, future research is needed to clarify the results of this study. When the three teachers in this study had difficulties in the classroom they reflected on their Professional Development School experiences, collaborated with others to solve particular classroom problems, and focused on their own desire and commitment to make a difference. These strategies reflected the major components of a Professional Development School model and effective teacher characteristics identified by Haberman.

The three urban teachers, who in this study had successfully completed a Professional Development School program, progressed very quickly through the developmental stages of teaching. Teachers progressed in their development as they mastered skills and overcame challenges. Initially concerned with adequacy issues, the teachers in this study shifted their focus to classroom

dynamics and strategies to meet the needs of their students.

Hence, as these teachers mastered their teaching techniques, and developed strategies to meet classroom challenges, they moved into higher stages of development. Piland's research (1992) supports the experiences of first year teachers in this study. Piland found that movement within developmental stages occurred when questions were answered and the unknowns about teaching became familiar. Teachers at higher stages of development functioned at a more complex level in the classroom. Research would suggest that teachers in this study were ". . . more adaptive in their teaching style, more flexible, and more tolerant" than teachers at earlier stages of development (Burden, 1986). Teachers at early stages of development are more concerned about themselves than about their students.

The results of the study provide information that may be used to further explore the skills and strategies first year teachers need in urban schools. The three teachers in this study utilized their Professional Development School training and their effective urban teacher characteristics to become independent, resourceful, and productive in their urban school settings. Considering the challenges of urban schools, their commitment to teaching in this environment provides insight into the needs of training new teachers and also the possible need to screen prospective teachers for these characteristics.

#### *Recommendations for Policy, Practice, and Further Research*

Because teacher shortages exist in many urban districts, school systems often hire people who are not licensed. Linda Darling-Hammond (2001) stated that when states and school

districts recruit untrained teachers or create short-term training programs, they exacerbate the problems of supply and demand. These practices are also more costly in the long run than providing incentives for hiring qualified teachers. The following recommendations are made for both policy and practice to publicize, create, and improve Professional Development School partnerships:

1. It has been recommended in various studies that Universities and school systems should expand the use of Professional Development School partnerships to train urban teachers (Berliner & Scherer, 2001; Teitel, 1997; Bell, 1995). The Professional Development Schools do cost more than traditional teacher education programs; however, research shows that, over time, Professional Development School programs are cost effective and better prepare teachers for urban schools. Taking into account the costs to states, universities, and schools to recruit, prepare, induct, and replace urban teachers, the actual cost of intensive five year programs designed to prepare qualified teachers is significantly less than the cost of short term programs that prepare and then replace a greater number of teachers who are less qualified and less likely to stay (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

2. Researchers need to continue to explore how Professional Development Schools influence teacher development. The three teachers in this study showed that they do reflect back on their preparation program. The three teachers in this study struggled in the areas of writing, collaboration with parents, special education, and strategies when working with at risk students. It could very well be that these are areas that need to be more

closely monitored during teacher preparation programs. Additional training may be beneficial at the university level in a) writing, b) collaboration with parents, c) special education, d) and at risk student strategies.

Training in effective communication skills may be needed at the university level, especially the teaching of writing. With two hours set aside in the curriculum for communication skills, the first year teachers in this study felt unprepared to teach writing. To help urban learners, teachers need more pedagogical course work on how students develop as writers and the best methods for teaching writing.

Prospective teachers may need additional experiences working with parents during their student teaching program. First year teachers in this study felt unsure how to relate to the parents of their students. Student teachers need to be included in school functions that involve parents to help them learn the proper interaction skills.

The three first year teachers in this study were unfamiliar with the special education process and had difficulty helping special needs students. Additional professional development opportunities may need to be utilized more during teacher preparation programs to highlight the special education process and to emphasize the knowledge needed to meet special needs in urban schools.

3. The principals and teachers in this study commented during interviews that prospective teachers need more extensive field experience to try out ideas, methods and strategies in a supportive classroom setting. Having the knowledge and being able to put ideas, techniques and strategies into practice would help

prepare teachers for the types of challenges they will face in the urban classroom.

#### *Recommendations for Further Investigation*

The following recommendations for further research are based on the findings of this study:

1. Replicate this study in a wider context. The present study involved a limited number of participants. Follow up studies could replicate this study on a larger scale to determine if the findings can be generalized to a wider population. Some specific themes to explore, as suggested in this study, are there differences in teacher's reactions to outside influences, and if so how does that impact teacher developmental stages. If teachers need time to adjust to urban classrooms, and those experiences have already been provided in their teacher preparation program, does that then focus the first year teacher more on student learning.

2. Follow up research should be done to determine if effective teacher characteristics remain throughout the career of urban teachers and how these first year teachers continue to utilize their effective urban teacher characteristics. Researchers could identify how effective urban teachers develop throughout their teaching careers and which characteristics are critical at various stages of their teaching careers.

3. To test the overall long term effects of Professional Development School teacher preparation, conduct a study following and comparing the students of teachers trained in Professional Development Schools over several years with those trained in traditional student teaching programs.

The Professional Development School Partnerships are making an impact in preparing teachers for urban schools. This study found that first year teachers trained in Professional Development School programs quickly mastered classroom discipline issues. Other teacher preparation programs need to explore the discipline models that work in Professional Development School settings and to implement similar models in their teacher preparation programs.

Urban school districts will continue to need effective teachers. Even if urban districts recruit qualified teachers, they will find it difficult to retain them. Because Professional Development Schools assume greater responsibility for the preparation and induction of new teachers than traditional preparation programs (Tomorrows Schools, 1990), Professional Development School partnerships with urban school districts can make the transition easier for first year teachers. This study found that these first year teachers trained in Professional Development School programs demonstrated personal and professional growth, made successful transitions into their first teaching experience, and showed a firm commitment to teaching in the urban environment.



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